

The Mission of the Church
in Paul's Letter to the Philippians
in the Context of Ancient Judaism

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The Mission of the Church in Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Context of Ancient Judaism

by

James P. Ware



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For Jan

with love and gratitude

ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores

Virgil, *Ecl.* IV

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PREFACE

This book is a revision of my doctoral dissertation which was written under the direction of Abraham J. Malherbe and accepted by Yale University in 1996. While I originally envisioned immediate publication with only minor changes, further study and reflection convinced me that more extensive revision and expansion was necessary. This process, although lengthy, has had the further advantage of permitting me to interact with relevant new literature in the wide array of fields upon which this study touches. I am grateful to Margaret M. Mitchell and David P. Moessner, editors of *Novum Testamentum Supplements*, for accepting this manuscript for publication in the series. I am also grateful to those who read all or parts of this work at various stages and made helpful comments and suggestions, including David Bartlett, Leander Keck, John T. Fitzgerald, Paul Raabe, and especially Wayne Meeks, whose help and insights were invaluable. But I am grateful above all to Abraham J. Malherbe, from whom I learned the science and art of exegesis, in whose seminar on the Thessalonian correspondence I first began to explore mission in Paul, and who suggested I take up the topic addressed in this book. Whatever is good in these pages is doubtless due to his direction, guidance and continuing influence. For the shortcomings of this work I alone am responsible. I am also thankful to the University of Evansville for grants which assisted me in purchasing needed books, and for a sabbatical release which permitted me to bring this monograph to completion. Special appreciation is also due librarians extraordinaire Juanita Chappell, Kathy Bartelt and Susan Walter. My students Emily Farmer, Brandon Pieczko, and Kristin Armistead were also of great assistance. Finally, and most importantly, I am thankful for the love and encouragement of my wife, Jan, and our son, Andrew. To Jan this book is dedicated.

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>AJT</i>	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>ASTI</i>	<i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>
<i>ATR</i>	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
<i>BAGD</i>	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i> , W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich and F.W. Danker
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>BDR</i>	<i>Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch</i> , F. Blass, A. Debrunner and F. Rehkopf. 16th ed.
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovanien- sium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
<i>BibSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BIOSCS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
<i>BjRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur <i>ZAW</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur <i>ZNW</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CIJ</i>	<i>Corpus inscriptionum iudaicarum</i>
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica, Old Testament
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testa- mentum
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EKK	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar
<i>EMZ</i>	<i>Evangelische Missionszeitschrift</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
JAC	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JPOS	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Periods</i>
JNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplements
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LSJ	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , Liddell, Scott and Jones. 9th ed.
MM	<i>The Vocabulary of the New Testament</i> , J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan
NCB	New Century Bible
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
PGM	<i>Papyri graecae magicae</i> , ed. K. Preisendanz
PWRE	Pauly-Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RevEx	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
SBLSCSS	SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	SBL Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLBS	SBL Sources for Biblical Study
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology

SCJ	Studies in Christianity and Judaism
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia theologica</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , eds. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich
<i>ThQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WB</i>	<i>Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch</i> , W. Bauer, K. Aland, B. Aland, 6th ed.
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

INTRODUCTION

It is well-known that Paul concentrated his missionary activity almost exclusively on a few important provincial centers situated along the main thoroughfares of the empire. Yet by the close of his third missionary journey he could write that he had “completed the preaching of the gospel of Christ (πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ)” in the regions in which he had labored (Rom 15:19). In what sense did Paul regard his mission as accomplished in regions where he had left numerous cities and entire districts unevangelized? William Wrede sought to solve the difficulty by suggesting that Paul thought in terms not of individuals but lands, and that his notion of the gentile mission accordingly envisioned only a representative preaching of the gospel; if the name of Christ were but preached in every province, then the whole world would have heard the gospel.¹ This view has been adopted by a number of scholars.² However, scholars more often assume the view of Adolf Harnack, that Paul’s selective missionary strategy presupposed the independent spread of the gospel from the centers he had founded into the surrounding regions.³

¹ William Wrede, *Paul* (London: Green, 1907) 47-48.

² For example, Hans Lietzmann, *An die Römer* (4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1933) 121; C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Black, 1957) 276; Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London: SCM, 1959) 48, 51-55, 277-78; Paul Althaus, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 147; Roger D. Aus, “Paul’s Travel Plans to Spain and the ‘Full Number of the Gentiles’ of Rom. XI 25,” *NovT* 21 (1979) 232-62; Arland J. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 125-37, 143-45; Lucien Legrand, *Unity and Plurality: Mission in the Bible* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990) 119-21; cf. E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983) 186. So already in Ernest Renan, *Saint Paul* (New York: Carleton, 1869) 326.

³ Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (3rd ed.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1915) 1.73-74; Nils A. Dahl, *Das Volk Gottes: Eine Untersuchung zum Kirchenbewusstsein des Urchristentums* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963) 241; G. Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) 54; M. Schlunk, *Paulus als Missionar* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1937) 45; Ferdinand Hahn, *Das Verständnis der Mission im Neuen Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1963) 10; John Knox, “Romans 15:14-33 and Paul’s Conception of His Apostolic Mission,” *JBL* 83 (1964) 1-11, esp. p. 3; Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (5th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978) 460; C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the*

These contrasting views of Paul's conception of his mission differ most fundamentally in the role which they assume Paul understood his churches to have in the mission to the gentiles. While Wrede's view would allow little or no room in Paul's thought for the further extension of the gospel through the communities he founded, the view of Harnack posits a crucial place for the missionizing activity of Paul's congregations in his missionary thinking.

What role did Paul envision his churches as having in the advancement of the gospel? The question is clearly of critical importance for our understanding of Paul's missionary strategy and his conception of the gentile mission. As such the question also possesses a wider importance, for, as has been widely recognized, Paul's understanding of his mission is integral to his self-understanding and thought as a whole.⁴ Yet the role of Paul's churches in the Pauline mission has received scant attention in New Testament study. In fact, the entire subject of mission in earliest Christianity, despite its undeniable importance for our understanding of the New Testament writings and of the ancient church, has received surprisingly limited treatment. It is thus with good reason that Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza once described mission as a "neglected" subject in modern New Testament scholarship.⁵ However, recent years have witnessed a remarkable rebirth of scholarly interest in the topic through the publication of several important studies.⁶ Study of the participation of Paul's

Romans (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1979) 2.762, 766; Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKK 6; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1982) 3.122; John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM, 1989) 343-44; James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1995) 144 (n. 50) ("perhaps"); L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 250 (cf. 212-221).

⁴ Cf. F. Laub, *Eschatologische Verkündigung und Lebensgestaltung nach Paulus* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1973) 78; Martin Hengel, "The Origins of Early Christian Mission," *Between Jesus and Paul: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1983) 53; C.K. Barrett, "Paulus als Missionar und Theologe," *ΣΤΚ* 86 (1989) 18; Paul Bowers, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of the Pauline Mission," *JETS* 30 (1987) 185-186; Terence L. Donaldson, "Israelite, Convert, Apostle to the Gentiles: The Origin of Paul's Gentile Mission," *The Road from Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on his Life, Thought and Ministry* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 62-84; N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God. Christian Origins and the Question of God: Volume One* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 360-361; Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel* 125; and Knox, "Romans 15:14-33" 2.

⁵ Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1976) 1.

⁶ Eckhard Schnabel's *Urchristliche Mission* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 2002),

now also recently made available in English translation as *Early Christian Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), marks the first full-scale scholarly treatment of early Christian mission since the work of Harnack (op. cit. note 3) almost a century ago. Other recent contributions include L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003); Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001); Wolfgang Reinbold, *Propaganda und Mission in ältesten Christentum: Eine Untersuchung zu den Modalitäten der Ausbreitung der frühen Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000); Johannes Nissen, *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999; updated edition 2004); the peculiar study of Alan Le Grys, *Preaching to the Nations: The Origins of Mission in the Early Church* (London: SPCK, 1998); and Peter T. O'Brien, *Gospel and Mission in the Writings of Paul: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995). The only other monographs in recent decades which attempt an investigation of mission, either with reference to the New Testament as a whole or to Paul's letters in particular, are Dean S. Gilliland, *Pauline Theology and Mission Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983); D. Senior and C. Stuhlmüller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983); Paul Bowers, *Studies in Paul's Understanding of His Mission* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1976); O. Haas, *Paulus der Missionar* (Münsterschwarzach: Vier-Türme-Verlag, 1971); Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970); and H. Kasting, *Die Anfänge der urchristlichen Mission: Eine historische Untersuchung* (BEvT 55; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1969). See also the somewhat broader treatments of David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991) (Part 1, "New Testament Models of Mission," pages 15-178) and Legrand, *Mission*, as well as the somewhat older but important studies of J. Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church* (London: Lutterworth, 1962) and Ferdinand Hahn, *Das Verständnis der Mission im neuen Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1963). A further welcome development is the appearance in recent years of a number of volumes of collected essays devoted to various aspects of mission in earliest Christianity: *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (eds. Jostein Ådna and Hans Kvalbein; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000); *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission* (FS Peter T. O'Brien; eds. P. Bolt and M. Thompson; Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000); *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach* (eds. W. Larkin and J.F. Williams; Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998); and *Recruitment, Conquest and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early Christianity and the Graeco-Roman World* (eds. P. Borgen, V.K. Robbins and D.B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998). In addition, a number of independent shorter treatments are also assembled in *Mission im neuen Testament* (ed. Karl Kertelge; Freiburg: Herder, 1982). A number of relevant articles are also found in *Persuasion and Dissuasion in Early Christianity, Ancient Judaism, and Hellenism* (eds. Pieter W. van der Horst, et al.; Leuven: Peeters, 2003). On the role of "house churches" in the missional enterprise, see Roger W. Gehring, *House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004). For the missionary setting of miracles in early Christian thought, see James A. Kelhoffer's study of the longer ending of Mark, *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (WUNT 2/112; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000) 245-339. The majority of earlier works are by missiologists rather than New Testament specialists. These earlier studies, in addition to the pioneering, and in many aspects still unsurpassed, work of Harnack (op. cit. note 3), include P. Wernle, *Paulus als Heidenmissionar* (2nd ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1910); J. Warneck, *Paulus im Lichte der heutigen Heidenmission* (2nd

churches in mission has also benefited from this renaissance. Until recently, even in the literature devoted to early Christian mission, very little attention had been given to the role played in the extension of the gospel, not by apostles, missionaries and evangelists, but by the congregations themselves.⁷ But in recent years a number of treatments of church and mission in Paul have appeared.⁸ And yet

ed.; Berlin: Warneck, 1914); Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* (London: Scott, 1912); K. Pieper, *Paulus, seine missionarische Persönlichkeit und Wirksamkeit* (3rd ed.; Münster: Aschendorff, 1926); M. Schlunk, *Paulus als Missionar* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1937); R. Liechtenhan, *Die urchristliche Mission, Voraussetzungen, Motive und Methoden* (Zürich: Zwingli, 1946); H. Boer, *Pentecost and Missionary Witness of the Church* (Franeker: Wever, 1955); W. Baird, *Paul's Message and Mission* (New York: Abingdon, 1960); and E.D. Roels, *God's Mission: The Epistle to the Ephesians in Missions Perspective* (Franeker: Wever, 1962).

⁷ The only full-length publications which had been devoted to the subject were the studies of Douwe van Swigchem, *Het Missionair Karakter van de Christelijke Gemeente, volgens de Brieven van Paulus en Petrus* (Kampen: Kok, 1955) and Peter Lippert, *Leben als Zeugnis: Die werbende Kraft christlicher Lebensführung nach dem Kirchenverständnis neutestamentlicher Briefe* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1968). See also the treatment of H. Greeven, "Die missionierende Gemeinde nach den apostolischen Briefen," *Sammlung und Sendung: Vom Auftrag der Kirche in der Welt* (eds. J. Heubach and H. Ulrich; Berlin: Christlicher Zeitschriftenverlag, 1958) 59-71. The question is also explored by Wolf-Henning Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter: Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission* (WMANT 50; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979) 119-150; D. Zeller, "Theologie der Mission bei Paulus," *Mission im neuen Testament* (ed. Karl Kertelge; Freiburg: Herder, 1982) 164-189 (p. 181); and Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 432-35. In addition, Liechtenhan's work (note 6) includes a short chapter entitled "Die Missionsaufgabe der Gemeinde" (pp. 84-91).

⁸ See especially the recent study of John P. Dickson, *Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities: The Shape, Extent and Background of Early Christian Mission* (WUNT 2/159; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2003). A number of briefer but important treatments have also appeared in recent years: Paul Bowers, "Church and Mission in Paul," *JNTS* 44 (1991) 89-111; I. Howard Marshall, "Who Were the Evangelists?" *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (eds. Jostein Ådna and Hans Kvalbein; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000) 251-263; Terence L. Donaldson, "The Absence in Paul's Letters of Any Injunction to Evangelize" (paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting, Nashville, TN, November 2000); Robert L. Plummer, "Imitation of Paul and the Church's Missionary Role in 1 Corinthians," *JETS* 44 (2001) 219-235; and idem, "A Theological Basis for the Church's Mission in Paul," *WTJ* 64 (2002) 253-271. Plummer explores the subject further in his unpublished study, "The Missionary Nature of the Church: The Apostle Paul and his Churches" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001). The topic is also addressed by O'Brien, *Mission* 109-132; Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 1390-1414; Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* 212-221, 250; and briefly discussed by Luke Timothy Johnson, "Proselytism and Witness in Earliest Christianity: An Essay in Origins," *Sharing the Book* (eds. John Witte Jr. and Richard C. Martin; Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999) 145-157 (p. 154).

even with the recent renewal of interest in the topic, only a handful of monographs and articles overall have addressed the question of Paul's understanding of the role of his churches in mission.

The generally scant attention devoted to this topic in New Testament scholarship reflects in part the paucity of information in Paul's letters concerning the role of his congregations in the advancement of the gospel. It is of course clear that Paul's letters reveal an interest in the participation of his churches in mission through their prayer (Rom 15:30-32; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1-2) and financial contributions (Rom 15:24; 2 Cor 11:8-9; 12:13; 1 Cor 16:6; Phil 2:25-30; 4:10-20) in behalf of the mission of the apostle.⁹ Wolf-Henning Ollrog has in addition argued, although his thesis has not won universal agreement, that Paul's congregations also participated in mission through the delegation of selected members to serve as Paul's co-workers.¹⁰ More recently, John P. Dickson has argued cogently for the activity within Paul's churches of authorized local missionaries who furthered Paul's missionary work after his departure.¹¹ Yet there is no explicit evidence that Paul viewed his congregations as themselves obligated to spread the gospel, or envisioned his churches' self-identity as involving an active mission to the gentiles. Strikingly, Paul nowhere in his letters overtly commands his congregations to spread the gospel, or exhorts his churches to engage in mission activity.¹²

⁹ Bowers, "Church" 101-102, 107; Greeven, "Missionierende Gemeinde" 69; Lippert, *Zeugnis* 178; van Swigchem, *Missionair Karakter* 23-33; Zeller, "Theologie" 181; Ridderbos, *Paul* 433-34; Liechtenhan, *Mission* 87. See now the thorough treatment in Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 178-227.

¹⁰ *Mitarbeiter* 129-132, followed by Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 151-152. So already in van Swigchem, *Missionair Karakter* 37-38. But Zeller regards the evidence as uncertain ("Theologie" 181).

¹¹ *Mission-Commitment* 133-152.

¹² The absence of such a mission command in Paul is noted by Bowers, "Church" 90, 106-108; Greeven, "Missionierende Gemeinde" 66-70; Lippert, *Zeugnis* 175-80, 190; Donaldson, "Absence" 1-14; Gilliland, *Theology* 188; Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 130-32; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 94-132; Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 1391-1395; and Johnson, "Proselytism" 154. Van Swigchem also notes the general lack of such a preaching mandate in Paul's letters (*Missionair Karakter* 218-21), but finds three exceptions. However, in each of the passages cited by van Swigchem the presence of a mission command is disputed. Two of the instances which he identifies occur in the disputed letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians (Col 4:5-6, Eph 6:15) (pp. 126-30). That Eph 6:15 constitutes a missionizing command is also argued by Schnabel (*Urchristliche Mission* 1402-1404), Blauw (*Missionary Nature* 102), O'Brien (*Mission* 119-125), Köstenberger/O'Brien (*Salvation* 196-198), and Otto Weber ("Kirchenmission? Eine Mission in gegliederter Vielfalt," *EMZ* 17 [1960]

In the absence of a command to proclaim the message, it would seem impossible to speak of a mission of Paul's churches to spread the gospel. The negative character of the evidence would appear to support the view of Wrede that Paul's missionary thinking had little or no place for an independent missionizing activity of his churches. Paul Bowers, for example, concludes from the lack of a mission command in Paul that "a concept of the church as mission apparently failed to take any definite shape in Paul's thinking insofar as it is available to us."¹³ According to John P. Dickson, "the proclamation of the gospel never appears as even a minor duty of Paul's converts."¹⁴ Luke Timothy Johnson in his recent study arrives at similar results. His conclusions neatly summarize the issues and are worth quoting in full:

Despite the amount of evidence concerning evangelism as carried out by leaders of the first generation, the New Testament is remarkably reticent concerning the place of such evangelization either as the mandate of the church as such or as an element in the life of the ordinary believer. Efforts to persuade others to believe are not ascribed or recommended to Christians apart from those with a commission,

136), but denied by Dickson (*Mission-Commitment* 114-120) and Roels (*God's Mission* 217-18). On the protreptic character of the apologetic conduct and speech enjoined in Col 4:5-6, cf. Lippert, *Zeugnis* 170-171, 178-80; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 302-307. E. Schweizer also finds an interest in a missionizing role of the congregation in Ephesians and Colossians, which he connects with the description of the church in these letters as the body of Christ ("Die Kirche als Leib Christi in den paulinischen Antilegomena," *Neotestamentica* [Zürich: Zwingli, 1963] 293-316; "The Church as the Missionary Body of Christ," *NTS* 8 [1961-62]: 1-11). However, Schweizer contrasts this with the complete lack of any such conception in the undisputed epistles, where, he contends, Paul's congregations participate in the gentile mission only through their prayer in behalf of the apostle ("Missionary Body" 3-4; "Leib Christi" 301-16). The only instance of a mission command which van Swigchem finds in Paul's undisputed letters is Phil 1:27 (συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) (*Missionair Karakter* 130, 136-37); he is followed by Ridderbos (*Paul* 434). Peter O'Brien has also recently argued that the command in Phil 1:27 to strive together for the faith involved evangelistic outreach (*Mission* 116-118). Dickson, however, interprets the exhortation solely in terms of the Philippians' own adherence to the message (*Mission-Commitment* 103-107), and Liechtenhan understands these words to refer to the Philippians' monetary support of Paul (*Mission* 87). The passage will be discussed in Part Two of this study.

¹³ "Church" 110. According to Bowers, it is therefore not possible to speak of "a definite concept unambiguously present in Paul of the church as an intended independent instrument of active mission" (p. 106). Similarly Donaldson, "Absence" 1-14.

¹⁴ *Mission-Commitment* 311.

either from the risen Lord or by the community, to carry out such a task. In the sense of verbal proclamation with the intention of converting others, evangelism is nowhere stated as an essential dimension of Christian identity.¹⁵

Yet, despite the negative cast of the evidence and the lack of an explicit mission command, there is striking evidence in Paul's letters indicating he expects his churches will have a missionizing impact on outsiders. Paul's concluding exhortation in his instructions to the Corinthians on the eating of meat sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 10:31-11:1) clearly reveals Paul's interest in the life and conduct of the members of the community as a form of silent propaganda serving to attract outsiders.¹⁶ Paul's instructions to the Corinthians regarding worship (1 Cor 11:2-14:40) reveal that he envisioned the church's worship as involving a similarly evangelical aspect (1 Cor 14:20-25, 11:26).¹⁷ In addition, recent study has suggested that the Thessalonians' successful imitation of Paul for which he praises them in 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 involved their activity in spreading the word of the Lord.¹⁸

The evidence Paul's letters present regarding church and mis-

¹⁵ "Proselytism" 154.

¹⁶ Cf. W.C. van Unnik, "Die Rücksicht auf die Reaktion der Nicht-Christen als Motiv in der altchristlichen Paränese," *Judentum—Urchristentum—Kirche* (ed. Walter Eltester; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1960) 221-234, esp. pp. 228-29, 233-34; Lippert, *Zeugnis* 171-180; Greeven, "Missionierende Gemeinde" 65-66; Zeller, "Theologie" 181; van Swigchem, *Missionair Karakter* 86-108; Bowers, "Church" 101, 107; O'Brien, *Mission* 89-103; Ridderbos, *Paul* 434; Bosch, *Mission* 137-138, 168; Marshall, "Evangelists" 260. See now Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 228-292, and Plummer, "Imitation" (219-235), who also argues that distinctions between "active" and "passive" propaganda skew the evidence (234-235).

¹⁷ Van Swigchem, *Missionair Karakter* 189-198; Lippert, *Zeugnis* 179; Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 129-130; Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 1398, 1406; Zeller, "Theologie" 181; Greeven, "Missionierende Gemeinde" 66-67; Bowers, "Church" 106; Marshall, "Evangelists" 261-262; Plummer, "Imitation" 233-234; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 293-302; Margaret E. Thrall, "The Initial Attraction of Paul's Mission in Corinth and of the Church he Founded There," *Paul, Luke and the Graeco-Roman World* (eds. A. Christofersen et al.; JSNTSS 217; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 66; Liechtenhan, *Mission* 87-88.

¹⁸ Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (AB 32B; New York: Doubleday, 2000) 116-118, 130-131; J. Lambrecht, "A Call to Witness by All: Evangelization in 1 Thessalonians," *Teologie in Konteks* (eds. J.H. Roberts et al.; Johannesburg: Orion, 1991) 321-43; James Ware, "The Thessalonians as a Missionary Congregation: 1 Thessalonians 1,5-8," *ZNW* 83 (1992): 126-131; cf. Marshall, "Evangelists" 259; van Swigchem, *Missionair Karakter* 131-32.

sion thus appears somewhat incongruous. Paul clearly envisioned his churches as integrally involved in the gentile mission, not only through their prayer and provision on behalf of the apostolic mission of Paul and his coworkers, but also by drawing others to the faith through their life, conduct and worship. Paul's letters thus reveal his expectation that his congregations would serve in various ways as a means for the conversion of outsiders, and 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 provides evidence that Paul's congregations did in fact engage in verbal missionizing activity. Yet such references, in comparison with Paul's references to his own mission activity, are surprisingly sparse, and Paul's letters appear to contain no direct command to his churches to spread the message of the gospel. As Peter Lippert notes, it is precisely the twofold character of the evidence which calls for explanation.¹⁹ Bowers concludes his study with the observation that "the evidence suggests a careful rethinking of common assumptions regarding church and mission in Paul."²⁰ He calls for a renewed investigation, based upon "a much closer scrutiny of the relevant texts."²¹ It is to such a fresh investigation of church and mission in Paul that this study will be devoted.

This study will examine anew Paul's understanding of the role of his churches in the spread of the gospel. In considering this question, I will seek to heed Bowers' call for a closer scrutiny of the texts, devoting close attention to one particular text, Paul's letter to the Philippians. Surprisingly, this letter has received little attention in discussion of early Christian mission activity. Yet upon close examination, the letter reveals an unusual level of interest in the preaching of the gospel, and bears particular promise of enlightenment regarding Paul's understanding of the place of his churches in the gentile mission.

In defining "mission" for the purposes of this study, in which we are enquiring in what way Paul envisioned his churches as involved in mission, it would seem the soundest method to begin with Paul's own consciousness of mission as this is revealed in his letters. Paul's own missionary consciousness is not a matter of dispute. Paul believed he had been commissioned by God to preach the gospel to the gen-

¹⁹ Lippert, *Zeugnis* 171 (n. 88).

²⁰ "Church" 111.

²¹ Ibid. 108.

tiles (Rom 1:1-5; 1:14; 15:15-16; 1 Cor 1:17; Gal 1:15-16). Paul's apostolic identity thus involved both the consciousness of a divine *command* to spread the gospel (1 Cor 1:17; 9:16; Gal 1:15-16), and the understanding that this task involved active verbal *proclamation* with the conversion of gentiles in view (1 Thess 2:4; Rom 15:15-16).²² Furthermore, Paul engaged in a wide *variety of activities* designed to bring about the conversion of others through the message. Thus in Paul's thought his social flexibility, life and conduct, and sufferings all had a missionary purpose (1 Cor 9:19-23; 1 Thess 2:1-12; 2 Cor 4:1-15). We may thus define mission in Paul as *the consciousness of a divine commission or command to bring about the conversion of others through proclamation of the message and associated activities*.

Given this definition, Paul's assumption that his converts' self-identity involved an obligation to prayer in behalf of the spread of the gospel, monetary support of the missionary enterprise of Paul and his coworkers, a lifestyle intended to win others to the faith, and worship oriented to the conversion of outsiders, reveals the strongly missional character of his churches in his thought.²³ But what of the further spread of the gospel through active verbal mission? Did Paul regard the verbal dissemination of the message as the exclusive responsibility of authorized proclaimers, as Dickson has recently argued?²⁴ Or was the work of missionaries and evangelists in Paul's thought part of a larger context of active spread of the message by believers generally? Clearly Paul's churches as a whole did not participate in the sort of planned missionary activity, whether local or itinerant, in which Paul, his coworkers, and other early Christian proclaimers engaged.²⁵ However, in this study we will be asking

²² Cf. Hahn, *Mission* 81-85; L. Peerbolte, "Paulus en zijn zending," *Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift* 54 (2000) 112-124; Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 930-938; Nissen, *Mission* 102-107.

²³ For literature on these dimensions of the church's mission in Paul's thought, see notes 16 and 17 above. The case is reaffirmed convincingly in Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 178-308.

²⁴ Dickson distinguishes between *promotion* of the gospel through prayer, giving, conduct and worship, which was Paul's expectation of his converts generally, and *proclamation* of the gospel, which was in Paul's mind the exclusive task of authorized local evangelists (*Mission-Commitment* 311-312). Cf. p. 131: "Nowhere [i.e. in Paul's letters] are believers portrayed as responsible for or engaged in the task of proclaiming the gospel."

²⁵ Throughout this study I will use the terms "churches" and "the church" interchangeably, following Paul's own practice as illustrated in Philippians (cf. Phil 3:6; 4:15), to refer to believers generally.

whether Paul expected his converts, within their own social settings, to seize opportunities actively to spread the message. Did Paul envision the self-identity of his churches as involving a divine command to spread the gospel? It is to this aspect of the question of church and mission in Paul that this study will be devoted.

An important related question involves the background or source of the missionary consciousness of Paul and other early Christian proclaimers. Modern New Testament scholarship has tended to view all ancient missionizing through the lens of the philosophic missionary, who has been portrayed as motivated by a divine command to preach.²⁶ These wandering preachers, usually identified as Cynics or Cynic-Stoics, are also frequently depicted as part of a broader class of religious and philosophical propagandists of various sorts, who understood themselves as “divine men,” and whose preaching was accompanied and authenticated by miraculous acts of divine power.²⁷ According to this view, the missionary consciousness of

²⁶ Cf. for example P. Wendland, *Die hellenistisch-römische Kultur* (3rd ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1912) 85-93; Kurt Deissner, “Das Sendungsbewusstsein der Urchristenheit,” *Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie* 7 (1930) 772-90, esp. pp. 781-87; W. Schmithals, *Das Kirchliche Apostelamt: Eine historische Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961) 100-103; K. Rengstorff, ἀποστέλλω, *TDNT* 1.399-400; ἀπόστολος, *TDNT* 1.409-12; and Gail Paterson Corrington, *The “Divine Man”: His Origin and Function in Hellenistic Popular Religion* (New York: Lang, 1986) 172-79, 185. Cf. the very similar portrayal in Samuel Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (London: Macmillan, 1905) 334-87, esp. pp. 358-63. For the thesis in a more nuanced form, see now Johnson, “Proselytism” 146-151.

²⁷ This view was argued in nuce by H. Windisch, *Paulus und Christus: Ein biblisch-religionsgeschichtlicher Vergleich* (UNT 24; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1934) 26-89, esp. pp. 50-52, and further developed and popularized by the influential dissertation of Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986; German original, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964) (see especially pp. 28-29, 95-96, 151-59, 220 [n. 469], 221 [n. 475]), whose conclusions have gained wide acceptance; cf. for example Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: Volume One, History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) 201, 355-58; idem, “Gnomai Diaphoroi: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity,” *Trajectories Through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 151; idem, “One Jesus and Four Primitive Gospels,” *Trajectories* 188-91; Hans Dieter Betz, “Jesus als göttlicher Mensch,” *Der Wunderbegriff im neuen Testament* (ed. Alfred Suhl; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980) 419-20; and Paul J. Achtemeier, “Gospel Miracle Tradition and the Divine Man,” *Int* 26 (1972) 195. On the wide influence of Georgi’s work, cf. L.L. Welborn, “Georgi’s Gegner: Reflections on the Occasion of Its Translation,” *Journal of Religion* 68 (1988) 568-74. In a fresh study, Corrington, while dissenting from Georgi in regard to the role played by pneumatic scriptural exegesis in hellenistic Judaism (*Divine Man* 30-32, 182-89), reaffirms Georgi’s construction of the mission-

the hellenistic *theios aner* figure was adopted by diaspora Jews, and through the medium of hellenistic Judaism became in turn widely influential in certain early Christian circles.²⁸ This study, by contrast, will proceed on the assumption that the source of the missionary consciousness in earliest Christianity is not to be found in hellenistic philosophy or religion. The reasons for this assumption may be briefly sketched here.

The portrait drawn above of the missionary “divine man” figure, the importance of his role in religious propaganda, and the influence of such figures upon hellenistic Judaism and Christianity, is heavily dependent upon Reitzenstein’s seminal reconstruction of hellenistic religion.²⁹ However, Reitzenstein’s portrayal of the oriental and mystery religions as missionary in character is a view now widely rejected by specialists.³⁰ In addition, the adoption of such a “divine man” tradition, so conceived, in hellenistic Judaism has been persuasively challenged.³¹ Moreover, other studies have strongly questioned

ary *theios aner* figure as a recognizable and important type in hellenistic philosophy and religion (43-48, 64-110, 180-181).

²⁸ Cf. Windisch, *Paulus* 101-114; Georgi, *Opponents* 95-96, 99-102, 104-117, 151-59; Koester, “Gnomai Diaphoroi” 151; idem, “Four Primitive Gospels” 190; Achtemeier, “Miracle Tradition” 187-97; Corrington, *Divine Man* 47-48, 130-43, 181-193.

²⁹ See Richard Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen* (3rd ed.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1927) 25-27, 65, 236-40, 271-75, 317-19.

³⁰ Cf. Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale, 1981) 98-99; A.D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (reprinted, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988) 13-16, 134-135, 267-68; M.P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (2d. ed.; München: Beck, 1961) 2.700; Carsten Colpe, “Einführung in die Geschichte und neue Perspektiven,” *Die orientalischen Religionen in Römerreich* (ed. Maarten J. Vermaseren; Leiden: Brill, 1981) 3; D.E. Aune, “Expansion and Recruitment Among Hellenistic Religions: The Case of Mithraism,” *Recruitment, Conquest and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early Christianity, and the Graeco-Roman World* (eds. P. Borgen, V.K. Robbins, D.B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 39-56; Jan den Boeft, “Propaganda in the Cult of Isis,” *Persuasion and Dissuasion in Early Christianity, Ancient Judaism, and Hellenism* (ed. Pieter W. van der Horst et al.; Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 9-23. For the depiction of these cults as missionary, cf. Reitzenstein, *Mysterienreligionen* 25-27, 92-93; Franz Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain* (4th ed.; Paris: Geuthner, 1929) 21-24, 77, 81; S. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (London: Murray, 1925) 245-46; A.J. Festugière, “A propos des aréologies d’Isis,” *HThR* 42 (1949) 231-32; Heinrich Dörrie, “Mysterien (in Kult und Religion) und Philosophie,” *Die orientalischen Religionen in Römerreich* (ed. Maarten J. Vermaseren; Leiden: Brill, 1981) 350-351; Koester, *Introduction* 1.200-203.

³¹ See Carl R. Holladay, *Theios Aner in Hellenistic-Judaism: A Critique of the Use of*

the influence of a “divine man” tradition in primitive Christianity, and indeed whether firm evidence exists for such a fixed type in antiquity.³² Given the absence of concepts of mission in hellenistic religion, the assumption that the mission consciousness of primitive Christianity may be traced to the influence of such putative missionary “divine men” figures is highly dubious at best.

The difficulties with the “divine man” hypothesis notwithstanding, the possibility of connections between traditions of propaganda in hellenistic philosophy and understandings and methods of mission in earliest Christianity calls for exploration.³³ However, before the

This Category in New Testament Christology (SBLDS 40; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1977), who bases his conclusions upon a careful study of the portrayal of Jewish heroes in Philo, Josephus and Artapanus. Corrington counters that the divine man type is a feature of popular Jewish piety and thus absent from the more philosophical treatments of Philo and Josephus, albeit discoverable in the more popular traditions represented by Artapanus (*Divine Man* 40-42, 130-43, 181-89); while admitting that the evidence for actual missionary “divine men” in hellenistic Judaism is scant (187), she finds such figures represented in Josephus, *Ant.* 20.34-48 and Horace, *Sat.* 1.4.142-43 (188-90). These texts will be discussed more closely in chapter one of this study.

³² See Barry Blackburn, *Theios Aner and the Markan Miracle Traditions: A Critique of the Theios Aner Concept as an Interpretative Background of the Miracle Traditions Used by Mark* (WUNT 2/40; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1991) 13-96; Aage Pilgaard, “The Hellenistic *Theios Aner*—A Model for Early Christian Christology?” *The New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism* (eds. P. Borgen and S. Giversen; Aarhus University Press, 1995) 101-122; and earlier, Jack Dean Kingsbury, “The ‘Divine Man’ as the Key to Mark’s Christology—The End of an Era?” *Int* 35 (1981) 248; Howard Clark Kee, *Jesus in History* (2nd ed.; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977) 152; Otto Betz, “The Concept of the So-Called ‘Divine Man’ in Mark’s Christology,” *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (ed. D.E. Aune; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 231-34; Wülfing von Martitz, *viós*, *TDNT* 8.338-40. See also Erkki Koskenniemi, “Apollonius of Tyana: A Typical *θεῖος ἀνὴρ*?” *JBL* 117 (1998) 455-467; idem, *Apollonius von Tyana in der neutestamentlichen Exegese* (WUNT 2.61; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1994). However, Koskenniemi appears to understate the evidence in denying altogether the existence of hellenistic miracle workers prior to the later second century A.D.; for cogent criticisms of Koskenniemi’s position, see Jaap-Jan Flinterman, “The Ubiquitous ‘Divine Man,’” *Numen* 43 (1996) 82-98. See now also Dieter Zeller, “The *ΘΕΙΑ ΦΥΣΙΣ* of Hippocrates and of Other ‘Divine Men,’” *Early Christianity and Classical Culture* (FS Abraham J. Malherbe; NovTSup 110; eds. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht and L. Michael White; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 49-69.

³³ In an insightful essay which invites further investigation, Troels Engberg-Pedersen argues that, as a result of their influential role within the social fabric of public discourse, an explicit “sense of mission” or concern with recruitment is lacking among the philosophical schools in the early hellenistic period (“The Hellenistic *Öffentlichkeit*: Philosophy as a Social Force in the Graeco-Roman World,” *Recruit-*

relationship of philosophical traditions of recruitment to understandings of mission in earliest Christianity can be accurately assessed, these traditions themselves require a more rigorous analysis than they have yet received, and the entire notion of divine vocation in antiquity requires a more precise definition than has yet been given.³⁴ A thorough discussion of these issues is beyond the scope of this book. However, on the one point of importance for this study, namely the consciousness of various philosophical proclaimers of a divine commission to preach, I am unconvinced.

It is of course well-known that Cynic preachers were abroad in great numbers.³⁵ Yet the assumption that Cynics were motivated to engage in this preaching activity by a sense of divine mission is highly problematical. To be sure, a number of ancient writers portray a consciousness of divine vocation as part of the Cynic's self-understanding.³⁶ However, the writers which do so (e.g. Epictetus,

ment, Conquest, and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early Christianity and the Graeco-Roman World [eds. P. Borgen, V.K. Robbins, D.B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars, 1998] 16-37). On the other hand, the direct influence of Cynic traditions upon the missionary consciousness and methods of Jesus, Paul, and the earliest Christians has been argued in a series of works by F. Gerald Downing; see *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches* (London: Routledge, 1998); idem, *Cynics and Christian Origins* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1992) 133-34; idem, "Cynics and Early Christianity," *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements* (eds. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé and Richard Goulet; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993) 282, 285-86; idem, *Christ and the Cynics* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988) 45-49. However, Downing's methods and results are highly problematic; see e.g. D.E. Aune, "Jesus and Cynics in First-Century Palestine: Some Critical Considerations," *Hillel and Jesus* (eds. James H. Charlesworth and Loren L. Johns; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) 176-192; Wright, *People of God* 427-428.

³⁴ This question is very much related to the larger question of the relationship between philosophical conversion and conversion in ancient Christianity. See among recent treatments the brief but foundational study of Abraham J. Malherbe, "Conversion to Paul's Gospel," *The Early Church in Its Context* (FS Everett Ferguson; NovTSup 90; eds. Abraham J. Malherbe, Frederick W. Norris, and James W. Thompson; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1998) 230-244; Hubert Cancik, "Lucian on Conversion: Remarks on Lucian's Dialogue *Nigrinos*," *Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Bible and Culture* (FS Hans Dieter Betz; ed. Adela Yarbro Collins; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 26-48, together with the response in the same volume by Edgar Krentz, "Conversion in Early Christianity" (pp. 49-58); and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *From Darkness to Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

³⁵ Cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 72.4; 32.9; Philo, *Plant.* 151; Lucian, *Bis Accus.* 6; Origen, *Cels.* 3.50-52. On the public and visible character of Cynic preaching, cf. Lucian, *Vit. Auc.* 10; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.4-5, 9-16.

³⁶ Cf. above all Epictetus' depiction of the true Cynic in *Diss.* 3.22 (see especially 3.22.23, 38, 46, 56, 59, 69, and compare 4.8.30-32; 1.29.46-49). A similar conscious-

Seneca, Dio Chrysostom) are Stoic authors. These authors utilize the uncompromising figure of the Cynic in order to portray the philosophic ideal, but the self-understanding and message ascribed to this figure is largely Stoic.³⁷ Although there may have been some diversity among Cynics in their attitude toward religion, the later Stoic conception of the divine as exercising providential care of the world and of individuals was in general not shared by Cynics.³⁸ The consciousness of divine vocation attributed to the Cynic in Stoic authors reflects a Stoic understanding of the sage, and should not be

ness of divine mission is evident in Dio's description of the ideal philosopher (*Or.* 32.12-13, 21) and in Seneca's portrayal of the Cynic Demetrius (*De ben.* 7.8.2-3; *Ep.* 20.9).

³⁷ Cf. Margarethe Billerbeck, *Epiktet: Vom Kynismus* (Leiden: Brill, 1978) 4-9; idem, *Der Kyniker Demetrius: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der frühkaiserzeitlichen Popularphilosophie* (Leiden: Brill, 1979) 18-43, 54-56; R. Laurenti, "Il «filosofo ideale» secondo Epitteto," *Giornale di Metafisica* 17 (1962) 501-13; John J. Collins, "Georgi's 'Envoys' in 2 Cor 11:23," *JBL* 93 (1974) 90. The Stoic character of the depictions of Cynicism in Epictetus and Dio Chrysostom is not sufficiently taken into account by J.F. Kindstrand, *Bion of Borysthenes: A Collection of the Fragments with Introduction and Commentary* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1976) 240.

³⁸ Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, "Les premiers cyniques et la religion," *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements* (eds. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé and Richard Goulet; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993) 117-158; A. J. Malherbe, "Pseudo Heraclitus, Epistle 4: The Divinization of the Wise Man," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 21 (1978) 45-51; idem, "Self-Definition among Epicureans and Cynics," *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* (eds. Ben F. Meyer and E.P. Sanders; 3 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) 3.57-58; Theodore Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* (4 vols.; New York: Scribner, 1908) 2.163-65; E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (4th ed.; Leipzig: Reisland, 1889) 2.1.328-30. The religious elements in the career of Peregrinus seem to reflect a later period of Cynicism (Hazel Hornsby, "The Cynicism of Peregrinus Proteus," *Hermathena* 48 [1933] 77-84). The hazard of anachronism is illustrated by Helmut Rahn's depiction of Cynic piety ("Die Frömmigkeit der Kyniker," reprinted in M. Billerbeck, *Die Kyniker in der modernen Forschung* [Amsterdam: Gruener, 1991] 241-57), which relies almost exclusively upon the descriptions of Cynicism in Themistius and Julian, who reflect a still later period, as well as Stoic, Neoplatonist and Christian influences. In addition, the possible influence of Christianity on Peregrinus requires further investigation; on the question, cf. Hornsby, who argues for Christian influence ("Peregrinus" 81-82), and Christopher Jones, "Cynisme et sagesse barbare: Le cas de Peregrinus Proteus," *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements* (eds. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé and Richard Goulet; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993) 305-17, who denies any appreciable Christian impact upon Peregrinus' Cynicism. How early in new Cynicism the influence of Stoic piety was felt is difficult to assess. The apophthegm attributed to Demetrius in *De prov.* 5.5 reflects the traditional cult, but the attribution is suspect in view of Seneca's Stoicizing portrayal of Demetrius elsewhere. For discussion of the passage, cf. Billerbeck, *Demetrius* 39-40, who is, however, perhaps too sanguine regarding the authenticity of the citation.

understood as reflective of the Cynic's own self-understanding.³⁹

In contrast to Cynics, the Stoic notion of the divinely ordained philosophic missionary presumably did influence the self-understanding of individual Stoic proclaimers.⁴⁰ This is evident, for example, in Dio Chrysostom's claim of a divine commission to address the people of Alexandria.⁴¹ However, the Stoic conception of divine vocation is more complex than the easy parallels often drawn between the philosophic mission and mission in earliest Christianity would seem to suggest. The Stoic language of a divine mandate to preach, which is of a piece with the general use among later Stoics of personal language for the divine, nevertheless occurs in the context of an ultimately pantheistic system which equated the divine with nature and the rational soul.⁴² Moreover, the Stoic understanding of the

³⁹ Cf. Margarethe Billerbeck, "Le cynisme idéalisé d'Épictète à Julian," *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements* (eds. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé and Richard Goulet; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993) 322-23; idem, "Greek Cynicism in Imperial Rome," *Die Kyniker in der modernen Forschung* (ed. M. Billerbeck; Amsterdam: Gruener, 1991) 165-66; Malherbe, "Heraclitus" 47.

⁴⁰ Stoics generally avoided the visible and public preaching activity in the marketplaces and street corners characteristic of Cynics, preferring to discourse in private lecture halls and similar settings (cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 52.9-12; 76.4; 108.3, 6, 14; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 32.8; Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.23.23, 30). However, outsiders were commonly invited (Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.23.6, 10, 23, 27-28, 35; Origen, *Cels.* 3.54) and, even in these more private environments, large crowds were not infrequent (Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.23.19, 35; D.L. 5.37; cf. Juvenal 1.12). In addition, some Stoics did preach in more public settings (cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 44.10; 32.11-13, 24; Horace, *Sat.* 2.3.77-81).

⁴¹ *Or.* 32.12-24; see Eugen Wilmes, *Beiträge zur Alexandrinerrede (or. 32) des Dion Chrysostomos* (Ph.D. dissertation, Bonn, 1970) 8-29; cf. Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.21.11-18.

⁴² Cf. Seneca, *De ben.* 4.7-8; *De vita beata* 8; *De clem.* 1.8; *De ira* 16; Epictetus, *Diss.* 4.8.32; 1.12.26-27; Marcus Aurelius 12.26. On the Stoic doctrine of the divine, cf. Athenagoras, *Supplicatio* 22, Origen, *Cels.* 5.7, and see Nilsson, *Geschichte* 2.396-98; Zeller, *Philosophie* 3.1.136-52, 321-27. The Epicurean author (apparently Philodemus) of *PHerc.* 1428, part of the larger work *περὶ εὐσεβείας*, criticizes the Stoics as practical atheists who, in redefining the gods as mere abstractions of material elements and forces, retain the gods in name but do away with them in reality (col. IV.12-VI.16, pp. 77-80 in the edition of Theodore Gomperz, *Herkulanische Studien* II [Leipzig: Teubner, 1865]). Cf. especially col. XII.3-12: οὗτοι δὲ θεοὺς ἐν τοῖς [σ]υγγράμμασιν ἐπονομάζοντες ἀνήρουν ἔξερραστ[ι]κῶς τοῖς πράγμασι[v] καὶ μετὰ σπουδῆς, ἀ[νε]λευθερώτεροι γινόμενοι Φιλίππου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἀπλῶς τὸ θ[ε]ῖον ἀ[v]αιροῦντων. The citation is according to the critical text of *PHerc.* 1428 edited by Albert Henrichs, "Die Kritik der Stoischen Theologie im *PHerc.* 1428," *Cronache Ercolanesi* 4 (1974) 5-32. A new edition of this portion of the treatise is being prepared by Dirk Obbink. For the first part of the work, see Dirk Obbink, *Philodemus: On Piety. Part 1: Critical Text with Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

philosopher's commission to preach must be understood within the wider context of the Stoic doctrine of divine providence or necessity. According to the Stoic understanding, all creatures must follow the divine law of the cosmos or fate, and the wise human being exercises freedom by voluntarily aligning his will with the divine necessity.⁴³ The philosopher's vocation is but a particular instance of this general providential ordering of the cosmos.⁴⁴ In the Stoic conception, the individual arrives at the conviction of this vocation through philosophical training and self-examination.⁴⁵ The precise nature of the Stoic understanding of individual vocation and of providence are issues requiring further study; but the Stoic conception of the philosopher's vocation is clearly very different from the consciousness of personal divine mission which meets us in Paul's letters, and in the portrayal of Paul and other Christians in the book of Acts (Gal 1:15-16; Rom 1:1-5; 1:14; 15:15-21; 1 Cor 9:16; Acts 1:8; 4:19-20; 10:42-43; 13:2; 26:16-18).

Epicureanism has in general not been brought into the discussion, and yet in certain respects early Christian missionizing shares more with Epicurean propaganda than with either Stoics or Cynics.⁴⁶ While the conversion which Stoics and Cynics sought aimed only at the reformation of individuals, Epicureans sought, as did Christians, to incorporate new adherents into tightly-knit communities guided by the example of their master.⁴⁷ To be sure, Epicureans seem to

⁴³ Cleanthes, *Frag.* 91; Seneca, *De prov.* 5.8; *De vita beata* 15.4-16.3; *Ep.* 96.2; 107.6-12; Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.12.7-9; *Ench.* 8; 53; Marcus Aurelius 10.28; cf. Zeller, *Philosophie* 3.1.312-13; Susan Sauvé Meyer, "Fate, Fatalism and Agency in Stoicism," *Social Philosophy and Policy* 16 (1999) 250-273.

⁴⁴ Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.22.1-8; Seneca, *De ben.* 7.8.2-3; cf. Adolf Bonhoeffer, *Epictet und die Stoa: Untersuchungen zur stoischen Philosophie* (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1890) 80; Billerbeck, *Epiktet* 50.

⁴⁵ Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.21.11-22; 3.22.53. On the role of reason and philosophical instruction generally in the determining of one's place in the providential scheme, see Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.11.39-40; 1.17.1-16; 1.20.12-19.

⁴⁶ Cf. B. Farrington, *The Faith of Epicurus* (London: Morison and Gibb, 1967) 144-45; on the contacts between the two movements more generally, see Abraham J. Malherbe, "Anti-Epicurean Rhetoric in 1 Thessalonians," *Text und Geschichte: Facetten theologischen Arbeitens aus dem Freundes- und Schülerkreis* (FS Dieter Lührmann; eds. S. Maser and E. Schlarb; Marburg: Elwert, 1999) 136-142.

⁴⁷ On the Epicurean communities, cf. Cicero, *De fin.* 1.65, D. L. 10.6, and fragment 8 in A. Vogliano, ed., *Epicuri et Epicureorum scripta in Herculaneis papyris servata* (Berlin: 1928) 70; see also Festugière, *Epicurus and His Gods* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955) 27, and Bernard Frischer, *The Sculpted Word: Epicureanism and Philosophical*

have been even less inclined than Stoics toward the kind of public propaganda in which Cynics engaged.⁴⁸ Yet paradoxically, this most reclusive of the schools was very successful in attracting new friends into the Epicurean communities.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Epicurean theology had no room for a divine preaching command or a sense of personal divine mission, nor did Epicurus' followers possess any command of Epicurus himself to engage in propaganda toward outsiders.⁵⁰

The absence in the philosophic missionary of a clear consciousness of personal divine mission suggests another source for the missionary consciousness reflected in Paul's letters. This in turn suggests that an examination of Paul's understanding of church and mission in light of his Jewish background will be fruitful.⁵¹ In particular, the letter to the

Recruitment in Ancient Greece (Berkeley: University of California, 1982) 52-66. The only comparable phenomenon among the philosophical schools were the old Pythagorean communities which existed in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., on which see Walter Burkett, "Craft Versus Sect: The Problems of Orphics and Pythagoreans," *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* (eds. Ben F. Meyer and E.P. Sanders; 3 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) 3.13-17, 22.

⁴⁸ Cf. Epicurus' precept, cited in D. L. 10.120, that the wise man will found a school, but not in an attempt to draw crowds to himself, and will lecture in public, but not willingly (σχολήν κατασκευάσειν ἀλλ' οὐχ ὥστ' ὀχλαγωγῆσαι, καὶ ἀναγνώσεσθαι ἐν πλήθει ἀλλ' οὐχ ἐκόντα). Frischer's contention that Epicurean recruitment was passive (*Sculpted Word* 5, 46-52, 70, 74, 77-128; cf. Engberg-Pedersen, "Öffentlichkeit" 31-32) seems on the whole to be correct, although this claim requires modification, at least for the Roman period, in view of the evidence which Lucretius and Diogenes of Oenoanda provide that Epicureans did seek disciples through literature and inscriptions. On the expressly protreptic purpose of Lucretius' poem, cf. *De rerum nat.* 1.921-50. Dirk Obbink has argued that *POxy.* 215, a fragment of an Epicurean treatise on piety, was also "a popular text in the sense of being explicitly addressed, in contrast to the extant works of Epicurus, to a non-Epicurean audience" ("*POxy.* 215 and Epicurean Religious ΘΕΩΡΙΑ," *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia* [Naples: Centro Internazionale per lo studio dei papiri ercolanesi, 1984] 618). However, that *POxy.* 215 is addressed to outsiders cannot be shown; Obbink's argument rests upon a confusion of the imaginary interlocutor with the intended reader.

⁴⁹ On the success of the Epicureans in attracting disciples, cf. D. L. 4.43, Cicero, *De fin.* 1.25, 2.49, and see Frischer, *Sculpted Word* 51-52.

⁵⁰ On the Epicurean rejection of divine influence in human affairs, cf. Lucian, *Bis Acc.* 2; 20; Epicurus, *Gnom. Vat.* 65; Lucretius, *De rerum nat.* 3.1-93; 4.823-57; 5.110-234; 6.1-95, and see Zeller, *Philosophie* 3.1.443-44, 448-49; Nilsson, *Geschichte* 2.251-52.

⁵¹ The immersion of Paul in Jewish traditions is stressed by Martin Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul* (London: SCM, 1991). Cf. p. 86: "Pauline theology . . . remains very closely bound up with Jewish theology. Its individual elements and thought-structure derive almost exclusively from Judaism." Cf. Wright, *People of God* 403-409.

Philippians, which is the focus of our study, although widely considered the least Jewish of Paul's letters, is steeped in Jewish traditions, and it is Jewish sources which will prove most fruitful in illumining the letter. Study of Philippians in light of its Jewish context will in turn illumine both the origins of Paul's missionary consciousness and his understanding of the role of his churches in mission.

Our study will accordingly begin in Part One, *Conversion of Gentiles in Ancient Judaism*, with an investigation of Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion in the second temple period. Chapter one will provide an introduction to the much-debated problem of Jewish mission and the presumed evidence, found mostly in non-Jewish sources, for Jewish missionary activity. The two remaining chapters of Part One will then turn specifically to Jewish sources and the evidence which they provide for Jewish attitudes toward gentiles in antiquity. Chapter two will examine the biblical foundations of Jewish conceptions regarding conversion of gentiles, focusing especially on the traditions of conversion reflected in the book of Isaiah. Chapter three will trace these and related traditions in Jewish literature of the second temple period, revealing the key role which interpretation of Isaiah played in Jewish understandings of the nations and their conversion. This chapter will also explore the evidence for divergent traditions, and the divergent understandings of the relationship of Israel to the nations which they reflect. Too often New Testament scholarship has distorted Jewish proselytism by looking at it through the lens of Christian mission. Our objective in Part One of this study, by contrast, will be to understand proselytism and conversion in ancient Judaism, its key facets, themes, imagery and texts, on its own terms. Strikingly, however, these same texts, imagery and themes will meet us again in Philippians, revealing both the Jewish roots of Paul's thought, and Paul's focus in the letter on mission. Paul thought Jewishly regarding conversion of gentiles, and this is the key to unlocking his understanding of church and mission.

In Part Two, then, *Mission in Philippians*, we will turn to the book of Philippians and the question of church and mission in Paul. Although this has not generally been recognized, Paul throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18 reflects on the extension of the gospel through his con-

See also Brad Young, *Paul the Jewish Theologian: A Pharisee Among Christians, Jews and Gentiles* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997).

verts. Chapter four will provide a brief introduction to the letter, followed by a close examination of Philippians 1:12-18a, chapter five will offer an overview of Philippians 1:18b-2:11, and the final chapter will consist of a detailed study of Philippians 2:12-18. This study will show how Paul's paraenesis, in this supposedly least Jewish of his letters, is shaped by Jewish understandings of conversion, especially from the book of Isaiah, and that understanding the way in which Paul utilizes these traditions will illumine both Paul's own consciousness of mission, and the crucial place of the mission of the church in his theology.

PART ONE

CONVERSION OF GENTILES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM OF JEWISH MISSION

1.1 *Introduction*

Christianity arose within Judaism, its earliest leaders and converts were Jewish, and Paul, the missionary apostle to the gentiles, was a Pharisee. The content of primitive Christian preaching and teaching reflects the movement's strong Jewish roots and character. Did the missionary consciousness of the early Christians also have its origins in Judaism? The question has not received a definitive answer. As Carl R. Holladay has observed, "the question of the exact relationship between Hellenistic-Judaism, its sources, its theology, its sociological complexion, and early Christian missionary preaching is still unresolved."¹ The chief cause of this lack of clarity regarding the relationship between Judaism and early Christian missionary activity is fundamental uncertainty regarding the nature and extent of Jewish proselytism in the second temple period. The missionary character of ancient Judaism is a problem whose solution has proven elusive, and in recent years has become the focus of renewed interest and debate.

During the greater part of the past century there existed a general scholarly consensus that Judaism was, especially in the diaspora, a missionary religion. Many scholars, past and present, have assumed the existence of itinerant Jewish missionaries who, like Paul, engaged in missionary preaching to gentiles.² The role of such figures in the

¹ Holladay, *Theios Aner* 239.

² Von Harnack, *Mission* 11-20; A. Bertholet, *Die Stellung der Israeliten und der Juden zu den Fremden* (Leipzig: Mohr, 1896) 252-53, 258-94; Georg Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier: Das antike Judentum als Missionsreligion und die Entstehung der jüdischen Diaspora* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1929) 62-66; F.M. Derwacter, *Preparing the Way for Paul: The Proselyte Movement in Later Judaism* (New York: Macmillan, 1930) 86-94; H. Ludin-Jansen, "Existait-il à l'époque hellénistique des prédicateurs itinérants juifs?" *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 18 (1938) 242-54; Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (2nd ed.; New York: Columbia, 1952) 1.173; H.J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History*

spread of Judaism has been particularly stressed by those scholars who postulate the influence of a putative hellenistic “divine man” tradition upon diaspora Jews.³ According to Dieter Georgi, the most influential exponent of this view, such Jewish missionary “divine men” were “numerous and assiduous” in the Graeco-Roman world, and a “permanent and regular facet of synagogue life.”⁴

A different view was represented by George Foot Moore. Moore described Judaism as “the first great missionary religion of the Mediterranean world,” in the sense that widespread efforts were made by Jews to convert gentiles, but he denied that Jews sent out missionaries to proselytize among the nations.⁵ According to this view, which has been held by a number of scholars, Judaism in antiquity was an active religion of conversion, but it was spread not through public missionary preaching, but through the personal recruiting efforts of individual Jews. Although there were no missionaries, there was an active and fervent Jewish mission.⁶

(Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961) 219-29; Martin Hengel, rev. of *Die Anfänge der urchristlichen Mission*, by H. Kasting, *TLZ* 96 (1971) 913; Macmullen, *Paganism* 78, 192 (n. 9); William Dalton, “Once More Paul Among Jews and Gentiles,” *Pacifica* 4 (1991) 55-58; Hans Conzelmann, *Gentiles-Jews-Christians: Polemics and Apologetics in the Graeco-Roman Era* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 104-105, 141; Clifford H. Bedell, “Mission in Intertestamental Judaism,” *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach* (eds. W.J. Larkin, J.F. Williams; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998) 28-29; James Carleton Paget, “Jewish Proselytism at the Time of Christian Origins: Chimera or Reality?” *JNT* 62 (1996) 65-103; Shelly Matthews, *First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) 1-25, 96-100; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 11-85.

³ E.g. Corrington, *Divine Man* 47-48; 181-93; Koester, *Introduction* 1.356-57; idem, “Gnomai Diaphoroi” 151; idem, “Four Primitive Gospels” 190.

⁴ Georgi, *Opponents* 96-112.

⁵ George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard, 1927) 323-24, 326, 348, 353.

⁶ Cf. William Braude, *Jewish Proselytizing in the First Five Centuries of the Common Era* (Providence: Brown, 1940) 4-8, 17-19, 24-25, 37-38; Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations* (SBT 24; London: SCM, 1958) 11-17; Dahl, *Volk Gottes* 73-74 (who leaves the question of missionary preaching open); Sidney B. Hoening, “Conversion During the Talmudic Period,” *Conversion to Judaism: A History and Analysis* (ed. David Max Eichhorn; New York: Ktav, 1965) 35-50; Richard R. de Ridder, *The Dispersion of the People of God* (Kampen: Kok, 1971) 95-96, 125-26; J.N. Sevenster, *The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World* (Leiden: Brill, 1975) 201-215; Steve Mason, “The *Contra Apionem* in Social and Literary Context: An Invitation to Judean Philosophy,” *Josephus’ Contra Apionem* (eds. Louis H. Feldman and John R. Levison; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 188-193, 222-224; Peder Borgen, “Proselytes, Conquest, and Mission,” *Recruitment, Conquest and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early*

Other students of ancient Judaism, while assuming the existence of a widespread and aggressive Jewish proselytizing movement in antiquity, have denied that one may speak of a Jewish mission. Karl Axenfeld introduced a now classic distinction between "mission" and "propaganda." Mission, Axenfeld observed, involves a divine command and consciousness of being sent (*Sendungsbewusstsein*). According to Axenfeld, the motivation of Jews to engage in proselytism did not originate from the consciousness of a divine commission to convert the gentiles, but from zeal born of a consciousness of religious superiority.⁷ Axenfeld did believe that a mission command was present in the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah, but remarked that Jews of the second temple period never based their proselytizing efforts on these passages, or on the Scriptures generally.⁸ He held that Jewish proselytizing activity is thus more accurately described as propaganda rather than mission.⁹ Axenfeld's distinction has been followed by a number of scholars.¹⁰

All of the views mentioned above assume that Jews in antiquity engaged in active propaganda, and that extensive efforts were made by Jews to gain gentile adherents. But recent studies have strongly contested this assumption. According to these studies, Jews of the second temple period had little interest in conversion of gentiles, and did not generally engage in proselytizing activity. On this view, gentile conversions were the result of Judaism's inherent attractiveness, not of active proselytizing on the part of Jews.¹¹

Christianity, and the Graeco-Roman World (eds. P. Borgen, V.K. Robbins, D.B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 57-77; Johnson, "Proselytism" 149.

⁷ Karl Axenfeld, "Die jüdische Propaganda als Vorläuferin und Wegbereiterin der urchristlichen Mission," *Missionswissenschaftliche Studien* (Berlin: Warneck, 1904) 46-50.

⁸ Ibid. 46-47.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ For example, Hahn, *Mission* 15-18; David Bosch, *Die Heidenmission in der Zukunftsschau Jesu* (Zürich: Zwingli, 1959) 31-42; Ernst Lerle, *Proselytenwerbung und Urchristentum* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1960) 12-18; Schuyler Brown, "The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission," *NovT* 22 (1980) 204. See now also Robert Goldenberg, *The Nations That Know Thee Not: Ancient Jewish Attitudes toward Other Religions* (New York: New York University Press, 1998) 102-107. Although he is apparently unaware of Axenfeld's work, his own conclusions mirror those of Axenfeld closely. Goldenberg, however, is more agnostic on the question of the extent of Jewish proselytizing activity in antiquity (see note 14 below).

¹¹ Shaye J.D. Cohen, "Was Judaism in Antiquity a Missionary Religion?" *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation: Past Traditions, Current Issues and Future*

The lack of consensus in current scholarship regarding Jewish mission is vividly illustrated by the two most recent full-length studies of the subject, Louis Feldman's *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* and Martin Goodman's *Mission and Conversion*, which reach conclusions on the very opposite ends of the spectrum of views sketched above!¹²

Prospects (ed. Menachem Mor; New York: University Press of America, 1992) 14-23; A.T. Kraabel, "The Roman Diaspora: Six Questionable Assumptions," *Diaspora Jews and Judaism* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992 [originally published 1982]) 7-8; idem, "Immigrants, Exiles, Expatriates, and Missionaries," *Religious Propaganda and Missionary Competition in the New Testament World* (FS Dieter Georgi; eds. L. Bormann, K. del Tredici and A. Standhartinger; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 73-88; John J. Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century," "To See Ourselves as Others See Us": *Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (eds. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985) 170-71, 184-85; Scot McKnight, *A Light Among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "A First-Century Jewish Mission to Gentiles?" *Pacifica* 5 (1992) 37-39; Charles H.H. Scobie, "Israel and the Nations: An Essay in Biblical Theology," *Tyndale Bulletin* 43 (1992) 286-288; Terence L. Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) 59-60 (to welcome but not seek converts was the "most prevalent" Jewish attitude, although some Jews did take deliberate initiative in seeking converts); Rainer Riesner, "A Pre-Christian Jewish Mission?" *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (eds. Jostein Ådna and Hans Kvalbein; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000) 211-250; Paul W. Barnett, "Jewish Mission in the Era of the New Testament and the Apostle Paul," *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission* (eds. P. Bolt and M. Thompson; Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000) 263-283 (limited proselytism of God-fearers, but not of gentiles); Peerbolte, "zending" 113-117; idem, *Paul the Missionary* 19-53. So already in Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1959) 264-71.

¹² Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994); cf. idem, "Jewish Proselytizing in the First Century," *The Jews Among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (eds. J. Lieu, J. North and T. Rajak; London/New York: Routledge, 1992) 53-78; Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); cf. idem, "Was Judaism a Missionary Religion in Ancient Times?" *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation: Past Traditions, Current Issues and Future Prospects* (ed. Menachem Mor; New York: University Press of America, 1992) 24-37. Uncertainty regarding Jewish mission is also reflected in the current debate on the nature and purpose of Jewish literature, a complex question which is beyond the scope of this study. The consensus throughout much of the previous century regarded Jewish Greek literature as almost wholly missionary in purpose (cf. Peter Dalbert, *Die Theologie der hellenistisch-jüdischen Missionsliteratur unter Ausschluss von Philo und Josephus* [Hamburg-Volksdorf: Evangelischer Verlag, 1954]; Bertholet, *Stellung* 259-94; Dahl, *Volk Gottes* 73). This view has been strongly challenged (cf. V. Tcherikover, "Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered," *Eos* 48 [1956] 169-93; Munck, *Salvation* 267-68; Cohen, "Missionary Religion" 17; McKnight, *Light* 57-62; Kraabel, "Immigrants" 82-83), and there is no longer any consensus regarding either the extent to which Jewish

A relatively recent article by James Carleton Paget is often regarded as a mediating view, but has not gained wide assent.¹³ Current writers now often hesitate on the question whether gentiles generally converted on their own initiative or were actively propagandized by Jews.¹⁴ Even estimates regarding the number of converts to Judaism vary widely.

May one speak of a Jewish mission in antiquity? The question has been complicated by the fact that in their study of ancient Judaism scholars have worked with widely divergent definitions of "mission." Attempts in recent years to achieve methodological clarity by defining "mission" more precisely have resulted, predictably enough, only in further controversy.¹⁵ The debate is often framed in terms of "maximalist" versus "minimalist" definitions of mission, yet often with no clear reasons offered why one should be preferred rather than the other. Is there a way out of the impasse of method and definition?

I would propose that, in seeking to understand the relationship between ancient Judaism and mission in earliest Christianity, a truly historical approach requires that we seek, as rigorously as possible, to understand both second temple Judaism and ancient Christianity on their own terms. Although this might seem a commonplace, one

Greek literature was intended for a gentile audience, or the extent to which the purpose of this literature was to bring about conversion. While this issue will not be specifically addressed in this study, particular aspects of the three works of Jewish Greek literature most commonly regarded as missionary (*Sibylline Oracles* 3, *Joseph et Aseneth*, and *Wisdom of Solomon*) will be discussed in chapter three.

¹³ The supposition that Carleton Paget's work (see note 2 above) represents a moderating position is in reality erroneous. Carleton Paget's reconstruction assumes not only a Jewish mission, but the activity of Jewish missionaries (84-102), and thus represents one extreme of the spectrum of views under discussion.

¹⁴ E.g. Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) 86; David Novak, "Proselytism in Judaism," *Sharing the Book* (eds. John Witte Jr. and Richard C. Martin; Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999) 23; John M.G. Barclay, "Universalism and Particularism: Twin Components of Both Judaism and Early Christianity," *A Vision for the Church: Studies in Early Christian Ecclesiology* (eds. Markus Bockmuehl and M.B. Thompson; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997) 212; Goldenberg, *Nations* 103; John C. Meagher, "As the Twig Was Bent: Antisemitism in Graeco-Roman and Earliest Christian Times," *Antisemitism and the Foundations of Christianity* (ed. Alan Davies; New York: Paulist Press, 1979) 7-8.

¹⁵ Carleton Paget, for instance, has criticized the definitions of Goodman and McKnight as maximalistic, while Carleton Paget's own definition has been criticized as so broad as to be meaningless. For the debate, see Carleton Paget, "Jewish Proselytism" 76-79; Riesner, "Jewish Mission" 221-223; Barnett, "Jewish Mission" 263-264; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 7-10.

could argue that this principle has been honored, by scholars on all sides, more in the breach than in the observance. From this starting point two important conclusions follow. First, if we are to address the question whether and in what sense the mission consciousness of Paul and the earliest Christians had its origins in ancient Judaism, our definition of mission must take adequate account of what this mission consciousness involved, as revealed in Paul's letters and other early Christian documents. It makes little historical sense to enquire concerning the origins and analogues of the Pauline mission in antiquity, while operating with a definition of "mission" which fails to correspond to the conception of mission reflected in Paul's own letters. The definitions of Carleton Paget and Dickson, for example, in their exclusive focus on activity intended to bring about conversion, ignore the striking consciousness of a divine commission, command or duty to bring about conversion of gentiles which is almost universally recognized as a crucial aspect of Paul's missionary self-understanding.¹⁶ Goodman's definition, on the other hand, in its sharp distinction between mission and apologetic, also fails to adequately reflect Paul's conception of his mission, in which not only Paul's preaching, but also his defense of the faith, conduct and sufferings had a missionary purpose.¹⁷ In the Introduction to this study I have suggested a definition of mission, drawing upon the consciousness of mission reflected in Paul's letters, as involving a divine commission to bring about the conversion of gentiles through verbal proclamation and associated activities (Rom 1:1-5; 1:14; 15:15-16; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:16; Gal 1:15-16; 1 Thess 2:4).¹⁸ This definition, I would suggest, reflects the key aspects of Paul's missionary consciousness in evidence in his letters. It is the definition of "mission" which will be used in this study. The substantive "missionary" will be used to refer to persons participating in local or itinerant planned preaching activity of the sort in which Paul and his coworkers engaged (Rom 15:18-21).

But second, we must also avoid the danger, to which scholars have often succumbed, of forcing the evidence concerning ancient

¹⁶ For literature on Paul's missionary consciousness, see above, p. 2, n. 4 and p. 9, n. 22. For the definitions of Carleton Paget and Dickson, see Carleton Paget, "Jewish Proselytism" 76-79; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 7-10.

¹⁷ For Goodman's discussion, see Goodman, *Mission* 3-6.

¹⁸ See pp. 8-9 above for fuller discussion.

Jewish proselytism into primitive Christian categories and thus failing to understand ancient Judaism on its own terms. In the study of Jewish proselytism, we must not only reckon with the possibility of the presence or absence of mission in the Pauline sense, but seek to understand the distinctive ways in which Jews of the second temple period related to gentiles and their conversion. As our brief survey of scholarship has already shown, this question involves a number of issues. Did gentiles convert to Judaism in significant numbers? By what means did these conversions take place? Did gentiles generally take the initiative, drawn by the attraction of Jewish faith and life? Or did Jews actively seek converts through propaganda and various forms of proselytizing activity? Is there evidence for Jewish missionaries who engaged in missionary preaching to gentiles? To what extent is there evidence of an interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews during this period? If so, may one speak of a Jewish mission, in the sense that Jews were motivated by the consciousness of a divine commission to convert the gentiles? Each of these questions requires an answer if we are to understand Jewish proselytism in antiquity, and thus the precise relationship between Judaism and the mission of earliest Christianity. In this chapter we will examine the evidence for Jewish proselytizing activity. We begin with the extent of conversion to Judaism in antiquity.

1.2 *Evidence of Gentile Converts*

How extensive a phenomenon was gentile conversion to Judaism in the era of the second temple? Did large numbers of gentiles convert to Judaism during this period? There is no longer a common opinion on this matter.¹⁹ It is often argued that the large Jewish population of the empire is fully explicable only on the assumption of a massive influx of proselytes.²⁰ The extent of the Jewish population in

¹⁹ Large numbers of converts are often assumed; Moore writes that the number of converts was "indisputably very large" (*Judaism* 348), and Georgi avers that "the spread of Judaism thus compares quite favorably with the missionary successes of the early church" (*Opponents* 84). Cf. Harnack, *Mission* 11; Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 16; Bedell, "Mission" 26. Cohen, by contrast, concludes that there is "little evidence that the total number of converts was large" ("Missionary Religion" 19). Cf. McKnight, *Light* 33; Murphy-O'Connor, "Jewish Mission" 39, 42.

²⁰ So Bertholet, *Stellung* 297-98; Harnack, *Mission* 1.11; Axenfeld, "Propaganda"

antiquity and the reasons for its growth are complex issues which cannot be entered into here. But even if we accept an estimate of anywhere from four to eight million Jews worldwide in the first century C.E.,²¹ it hardly seems necessary to posit large numbers of conversions in order to account for this figure. In the absence of a more precise demographic analysis than has been offered, the argument remains highly speculative at best.²²

Jewish inscriptions from antiquity provide more concrete information. These provide evidence of converts, but do not give the impression of massive conversions. Of approximately 1800 extant Jewish inscriptions, only seventeen by my count mention proselytes.²³

30; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 25; Schoeps, *Paul* 221-22; Georgi, *Opponents* 83-84; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 293; Carleton Paget, "Proselytism" 82-83, 101; Goldenberg, *Nations* 60. According to Feldman the increase in Jewish population is "the chief reason for presuming that there were massive conversions to Judaism during this period" (*Jew and Gentile* 293). Georgi even claims that "the increase due to conversion of the pagans was a much larger factor than the natural growth of the Jewish population" (*Opponents* 84).

²¹ Cf. V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1959) 504-505 (n. 86); Baron, *History* 1.170, 370-72 (n. 7) (eight million); Schoeps, *Paul* 222 (four and a half million).

²² The argument is rejected by Kasting, *Anfänge* 11-13; Cohen, "Missionary Religion" 19-20; McKnight, *Light* 33, 63; Goodman, *Mission* 84; and Riesner, "Jewish Mission" 220-221.

²³ More than a third of these are from Rome, where nevertheless out of 534 extant inscriptions only seven refer to proselytes; see *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum: Jewish Inscriptions from the Third Century B.C. to the Seventh Century A.D.* (hereafter *CIJ*) (ed. Jean-Baptiste Frey; 2 vols; New York: Ktav, 1975) vol. 1, nos. 21, 68, 202, 222, 256, 462, 523. In no. 576 (Venosa) the reading *προσήλυτος* is doubtful. There are six examples from Jerusalem (*CIJ* nos. 1385, 1390; B. Bagatti and J.T. Milik, *Gli scavi del Dominus Flevit. I. La necropoli del periodo romano* [Jerusalem: 1958] 59 [no. 31], 84 [no. 13], 89 [no. 21]; Gideon Avni and Zvi Greenhut, eds., *The Akeldama Tombs: Three Burial Caves in the Kidron Valley, Jerusalem* [Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1996] 53 [no. 19]), one from Caesarea Maritima (Baruch Lifshitz, "Inscriptions grecques de Césaré en Palestine," *Revue Biblique* 68 [1961] 115 [no. 2]), one from Cyrene (Gert Lüderitz, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika* [Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1983] no. 12), and one from Dura (Joseph Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* [Jerusalem: Carta, 1978] no. 88). The recently published inscription from Aphrodisias also mentions three proselytes (Joyce M. Reynolds and Robert Tannenbaum, *Jews and God-Fearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary* [Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1987] lines 13, 17, 22). Ross Kraemer argues that the term *Ἰουδαῖος* may be used in some inscriptions to refer to gentile converts, which if true would add a few more examples ("On the Meaning of the Term 'Jew' in Graeco-Roman Inscriptions," *HTR* 82 [1989] 35-53); she is followed by McKnight, *Light* 132 (n. 12). However, the evidence for this thesis is problematic at best. Kraemer's argu-

However, the scarcity of such inscriptions may be due to a variety of causes, and cannot be considered conclusive evidence that the number of proselytes was small.²⁴

A number of gentile and Jewish writers also mention proselytes. We read of individual converts to Judaism such as one Nicolaos of Antioch,²⁵ and the Roman matron Fulvia, whom Josephus describes as νομίμοις προσεληλυθυῖα τοῖς Ἰουδαϊκοῖς.²⁶ Josephus dwells at length upon the conversion of Izates, his mother Helena, his brother Monobazus, and other members of the royal court of Adiabene.²⁷ Josephus also tells of the conversion of Azizus king of Emessa for the sake of marriage to Drusilla,²⁸ and of how Polemo king of Cilicia likewise converted for the sake of marriage to Berenice, only to abandon Judaism when the marriage was dissolved.²⁹ Perhaps Flavius Clemens and his wife Flavia Domitilla were also converts, although the precise extent of their attachment to Judaism is unclear.³⁰ A number of other texts refer explicitly to the phenomenon of conversion to Judaism or to the existence of proselytes.³¹

Such passages are often regarded as evidence of large-scale conversions to Judaism.³² J.N. Sevenster, for example, believes that the vexation at the conversion of gentiles shown by such authors as Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.5.1-2) and Juvenal (14.99-104) proves that they were "regu-

ment relies heavily upon the presence of pagan elements in inscriptions by persons who designate themselves as Jews; but it is more likely that these individuals were syncretistic Jews than Judaizing pagans. For an interpretation of such inscriptions along these lines, see Pau Figueras, "Epigraphic Evidence for Proselytism in Ancient Judaism," *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990) 203-205; cf. also Stephen G. Wilson, "ΟΙ ΠΟΤΕ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ: Epigraphic Evidence for Jewish Defectors," *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity* (ESCJ 9; eds. Stephen G. Wilson and Michael Desjardins; Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2000) 354-371.

²⁴ Rightly Mason, "Invitation" 190-191.

²⁵ Acts 6:5.

²⁶ *Ant.* 18.82.

²⁷ *Ant.* 20.34-53, 75; cf. *War* 2.520, 6.356-57.

²⁸ *Ant.* 20.139.

²⁹ *Ant.* 20.145-46.

³⁰ Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* 67.14.1-3.

³¹ Ac 2:10; *CD* 14.3-6; 2 *Baruch* 41.4, 42.5; Epictetus, *Diss.* 2.9.19-21; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.1-2; Juvenal 14.99-104; possibly also Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2. Josephus also tells of forced conversions in areas of Idumaea and Ituraea conquered by the Hasmonean kings John Hyrcanus I and Aristobulus (*Ant.* 13.254-58, 318-19; cf. *Ant.* 13.395-97).

³² Cf. Neil J. McEleney, "Conversion, Circumcision and the Law," *NTS* 20 (1973-74) 321-325; Schoeps, *Paul* 222; Kasting, *Anfänge* 13.

larly being confronted” by the phenomenon of such conversions.³³ One wonders whether this conclusion is inescapable. In the eyes of Tacitus and Juvenal a single convert was no doubt one too many. Other texts, however, do speak more directly to the extent of gentile conversions, and permit us to conclude that there were perhaps a fair number of them. Dio Cassius speaks of “many” converts during the reign of Tiberius.³⁴ Josephus reports that almost the entire female populace of Damascus, and large numbers of gentiles at Antioch, had been brought over to the Jewish worship (*War* 2.560; *Ant.* 7.45). Whether Josephus refers to full conversion in either instance is not entirely clear, however, and in any case he implies that these were local and exceptional situations. But if Pisidian Antioch was typical, we may assume that the synagogues in the hellenistic cities each had their contingent of proselytes, of greater or lesser size.³⁵ Josephus is thus probably not exaggerating much when he claims that “many” (πολλοί) gentiles had converted to Judaism.³⁶ The total number of converts was most likely not inconsiderable.

1.3 *Evidence of Gentile Sympathizers or “God-fearers”*

Thus far we have considered the evidence only of gentile proselytes. However, in considering the extent of conversion to Judaism in antiquity, one must look beyond merely full converts to Judaism. In the words of Louis Feldman,

Judaism’s success in winning adherents during the Hellenistic and Roman periods is to be measured not merely in terms of the number of converts but also the number of so-called “God-fearers” or “sympathizers,” those non-Jews who adopted certain Jewish practices without actually converting to Judaism.³⁷

According to the traditional view, there existed on the fringe of the diaspora Jewish communities a well-defined class of gentile adherents

³³ Sevenster, *Roots* 194-95; cf. Mason, “Invitation” 188-195.

³⁴ *Hist. Rom.* 37.16.5-37.17.1; and possibly again during the reign of Domitian (67.14.1-3).

³⁵ Acts 13:43.

³⁶ *Ap.* 2.123. Nevertheless, the limited context of Josephus’ remarks should be carefully noted (cf. 2.121-124).

³⁷ *Jew and Gentile* 342.

who had accepted the monotheistic faith of Israel, frequented the synagogues, and practiced some of the ceremonial requirements of the law, but stopped short of circumcision. These gentile "semi-proselytes" enjoyed a quasi-official status in the Jewish communities and were known by the technical name of φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν or σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν.³⁸ The evidence for the existence of such a class of gentile "worshippers of God" is drawn in large measure from the book of Acts. A.T. Kraabel, calling attention to the lack of widespread evidence outside Acts for the existence of such a circle of God-fearers, has strongly questioned the historicity of Luke's portrayal.³⁹ It has also been questioned whether these gentiles represented any such fixed pattern of practice and belief, or had any such defined position within the Jewish community, as the traditional view supposes.⁴⁰ Other scholars have disputed the extent to which the terms in question in Acts were in fact strict technical designations for a particular class of gentile, or could have a broader usage, in Acts and elsewhere.⁴¹ Despite these questionings of the traditional view, the general consensus has remained that there did exist in antiquity a recognized class of partially-committed gentile sympathizers known by the semi-technical designations "fearers of God" or "worshippers of God."⁴²

³⁸ For this view, see for example K.G. Kuhn and H. Stegemann, "Proselyten," *PWRE Sup* 9 (1962) 1260; Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 15-16; Dahl, *Volk Gottes* 73; Sevringer, *Roots* 198; Goldenberg, *Nations* 60.

³⁹ A.T. Kraabel, "The Disappearance of the 'God-Fearers,'" *Numen* 28 (1981) 113-26; idem, "Synagoga Caeca: Systematic Distortion in Gentile Interpretations of Evidence for Judaism in the Early Christian Period," *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (eds. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985) 227-32; idem, with R.S. MacLennan, "The God-Fearers—A Literary and Theological Invention," *BAR* 112 (1984) 47-53; idem, "Greeks, Jews, and Lutherans in the Middle Half of Acts" *Christians Among Jews and Gentiles* (ed. George W.E. Nickelsburg with George W. MacRae; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 150-56; idem, "Immigrants" 81, 85.

⁴⁰ E.g. Cohen, "Boundary" 31-33; Collins, "Symbol" 183-84.

⁴¹ E.g. K. Lake, "Proselytes and God-Fearers," *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I. The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 5, "Additional Notes" (eds. F.J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake; London: Macmillan, 1933) 74-96; L.H. Feldman, "Jewish 'Sympathizers' in Classical Literature and Inscriptions," *TAPA* 81 (1950) 200-208; Dalbert, *Missionsliteratur* 22 (n. 5); McEleney, "Conversion" 325-28; Max Wilcox, "The God-Fearers in Acts—A Reconsideration," *JSTNT* 13 (1981) 102-22; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 342.

⁴² Cf. Tessa Rajak, "Jews and Christians as Groups in a Pagan World," *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (eds. Jacob Neusner

The question of gentile sympathizers or God-fearers is a complex problem, and a thorough discussion of this question is beyond the scope of this study.⁴³ However, I am not convinced that either the revisionist view of Kraabel or the consensus view do full justice to the data. Two points in particular merit reexamination: the use of the term “God-fearer” as a designation for sympathizers or partial converts, and the number of such sympathizers which existed in antiquity.

1.3.1 *The Term “God-fearer” as a Designation for Gentile Sympathizers*

It is widely believed that the book of Acts employs the terms “fearers of God” and “worshippers of God” univocally to describe a class of gentile sympathizers or partial converts. This is an assumption shared by Kraabel and almost all of his critics. Is this assumption in fact correct? The terms in question appear eleven times in Acts.⁴⁴ The first three occurrences are found in Acts 10 in Luke’s description of Cornelius. In Acts 10:2 and 10:22 the phrase φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν appears as one of a number of attributives which serve to underscore Cornelius’ piety.⁴⁵ In Acts 10:35 the term occurs

and Ernest S. Frerichs; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985) 257-59; P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (SNTSMS 69; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 145-66; McKnight, *Light* 110-114; Cohen, “Boundary” 31-33; Segal, *Paul the Convert* 93-96; Conzelmann, *Gentiles-Jews-Christians* 18; Collins, “Symbol” 183-84; Carleton Paget, “Proselytism” 91-93; Martinus de Boer, “God-Fearers in Luke-Acts,” *Luke’s Literary Achievement* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 50-71; John G. Gager, “Jews, Gentiles and Synagogues in the Book of Acts,” *Christians Among Jews and Gentiles* (eds. George W.E. Nickelsburg and George W. MacRae; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 91-99; J.A. Overman, “The God-Fearers: Some Neglected Features,” *Diaspora Jews and Judaism* (eds. J.A. Overman and Robert S. MacLennan; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) 145-52; Thomas M. Finn, “The God-fearers Reconsidered,” *CBQ* 47 (1985) 75-84; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 342-82.

⁴³ For the literature on the topic, which is extensive, see Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 569-70 (n. 1).

⁴⁴ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν [or αὐτόν] 10:2, 10:22, 10:35, 13:16, 13:26; σεβόμενος [τὸν θεόν] 13:43, 13:50, 16:14, 17:4, 17:17, 18:7. The appearance of this phrase in Lk 1:50 functions within Luke’s narrative to foreshadow Acts 10 and the gentile mission, according to Hans-Josef Klauck, “Gottesfürchtige im Magnificat?” *NTS* 43 (1997) 134-139.

⁴⁵ In 10:2 Cornelius is described as εὐσεβῆς καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν σὺν παντὶ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ, ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας πολλὰς τῷ λαῷ καὶ δεόμενος τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ πάντος, and in 10:22 he is similarly described as ἀνὴρ δίκαιος καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν μαρτυρούμενός τε ὑπὸ ὅλου τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

as one part of a two-fold designation (ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην). To be sure, the term in Acts 10:35 is specifically applied to both Jew and gentile (ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει), and the expression hardly seems technical in any of the three passages, any more than the terms εὐσεβής, δίκαιος or ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην.⁴⁶ However, when applied to the uncircumcized Cornelius, the phrase φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν, in portraying him as marked by Jewish piety, does identify him as a sympathizer or partial convert. From Acts 10 alone one might conclude that the phrase φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν serves in Luke, when applied to gentiles such as Cornelius, as a designation for partial converts.

However, the term φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν appears again in Paul's address to the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia (13:16, 26). Here it serves to designate a group within the synagogue distinct from, and yet associated with, the Jews (cf. esp. 13:26 οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν).⁴⁷ One might expect from Acts 10 that these would be sympathizers or semi-converts, and it is usually taken for granted that this is the case. It is not often noticed, however, that this group is contrasted specifically with *native* Jews.⁴⁸ On the supposition that

⁴⁶ Cf. Wilcox, "God-Fearers" 104-107; Lake, *Acts* 86; Trebilco, *Communities* 249 (n. 30). This is in agreement with the usage of φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν outside Acts, where it is not always used in a univocal technical sense to signify a special class of gentile, but may be an honorable term applicable to either gentile or Jew. Cf. *Sir* 2:7-9, 2:15-17; *Joseph et Asen.* 8:5-6, 8:9; Justin, *Dial.* 10.4, 24.3; and see Feldman, "Sympathizers"; McEleney, "Conversion" 326. In *Dial.* 10.4 the phrase is specifically applied to both Jews and proselytes. The arguments of Graham Stanton that the term in *Dial.* 10.4 refers to gentile sympathizers are unconvincing; see "'God-Fearers': Neglected Evidence in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*," *Ancient History in a Modern University, Volume 2: Early Christianity, Late Antiquity and Beyond* (eds. T.W. Hillard, R.A. Kearsley, C.E.V. Nixon and A.M. Nobbs; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 45-48.

⁴⁷ Wilcox argues that οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν in Acts 13:16 and 13:26 may simply be a further description of the Jews ("God-Fearers" 107-108; cf. Lake, *Acts* 86-87), but the presence of the definite article makes this extremely unlikely (cf. A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* [4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934] 757-58, 786-87), as does the further modifier ἐν ὑμῖν in 13:26.

⁴⁸ The addressees distinguished from the God-fearers are described in 13:16 as Ἰσραηλῖται, a term applicable only to Jews by birth (cf. Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Phil 3:5; *CD* 14.3-6), and in 13:26 as υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ, a yet more explicit reference to native Jews. The fact is seldom noted. Folker Siegert recognizes that the expressions Ἰσραηλῖται and υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ refer strictly speaking only to native Jews, but contends that they could also be applied to proselytes ("Gottesfürchtige

οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν are sympathizers, Paul in his address quite inexplicably omits all reference to full converts or proselytes! It would seem therefore far more likely that the fearers of God in Acts 13:16 and 13:26 are either proselytes, or, more likely, a mixed group of proselytes and partial adherents. We thus encounter a seemingly rather odd situation: in Acts 10 the phrase φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν is used to refer unambiguously to a gentile sympathizer, and in Acts 13 to refer just as unambiguously to full proselytes, or to a mixed group which must have included proselytes. The evidence from Acts 10 and 13 suggests that the term φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν is used by Luke more broadly than is commonly supposed: to refer to gentile adherents generally, whether full converts (13:16; 13:26) or sympathizers (10:2; 10:22; 10:35).

In Acts 13:43 Paul again refers to a group of gentiles affiliated with the Jews yet distinct from them (πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν σεβομένων προσήλυτων). The phrase οἱ σεβόμενοι προσήλυτοι which Luke employs in 13:43 marks the first of six occurrences of the term σεβόμενος [τὸν θεόν] in the book of Acts. The use of the term in 13:43 to modify προσήλυτοι is striking in view of the almost universally accepted view that in Acts σεβόμενος [τὸν θεόν] is used exclusively to refer to gentile sympathizers. However, unless the expression be regarded as simply unintelligible, it is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that at least a significant portion of the group to which Luke refers here must have been full converts.⁴⁹

und Sympathisanten,” *JStJ* 4 [1973] 129-130). However, Siegert’s appeal for proof to the rabbinic literature is anachronistic, and also beside the point, for while some rabbis did assert that the proselyte was “like an Israelite in all respects” (*b. Yebam.* 47b), not even the rabbis called proselytes “Israelites” or “sons of the progeny of Abraham,” terms applicable only to native Jews. “Israelites” and “proselytes” are specifically distinguished in *MdRi Nezikin* 18.9-32, and *t. Qidd.* 5.1. But cf. Judith 14.10, where the proselyte Achior is described as “added to the house of Israel” (προσεταιρήθη εἰς τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ); also Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* 37.17.1.

⁴⁹ In Acts 13:43 οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι designates specifically Jews by birth, as in Ac 2:11 (Ἰουδαῖοι τε καὶ προσήλυτοι); rightly de Boer, “God-Fearers” 54 (n. 11), 56-57. It is sometimes suggested that Luke perhaps uses προσήλυτος in a looser sense here, to refer not to full converts but to gentiles with lesser attachments to Judaism (e.g. Overman, “God-Fearers” 147-48; McKnight, *Light* 157-58 [n. 61]; Siegert, “Gottesfürchtige” 139). However, neither in Luke’s usage (cf. Acts 2:11, 6:5) nor elsewhere (cf. Philo, *Spec. leg.* 1.51-52) is there any evidence for such a broader meaning of the term, which always designates a full convert. As a variety of witnesses make clear, a proselyte in antiquity was required to disown the pagan gods, join the Jewish community, obey the whole Jewish law, and, if a male, be circumcised

The term *σεβόμενος* recurs in 13:50 to designate women of apparently the same group described in 13:43. Likewise in the accounts of Paul's preaching in the synagogues at Thessalonica (17:4) and at Athens (17:17), the term *σεβόμενος* is used to designate a group of gentiles associated with yet distinct from the Jews.⁵⁰ It is possible that *σεβόμενος* in these passages refers exclusively to proselytes, or exclusively to sympathizers. However, in light of the apparent equation in Acts 13 of this term (13:43; 13:50) with the term *φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν* (13:16; 13:26), which we have seen is an elastic term which can refer to a broad spectrum of gentile adherents, it is more likely that the term *σεβόμενος* is used by Luke in a sense closely synonymous with the phrase *φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν*, as a designation encompassing gentile adherents generally, from proselytes to those with lesser attachments.⁵¹ It is thus unclear from the phrase *σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν* alone whether we are to identify Lydia of Thyatira (16:14) and Titius Justus (18:7) as proselytes or partial adherents.

In Acts, then, Luke appears to use the terms *φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν* and *σεβόμενος [τὸν θεόν]*, not as exclusive designations for sympathizers only, as is widely supposed, but as a wider designation which can be used to refer either to sympathizers or full converts. How does Luke's use of these terms compare to their use in literature and inscriptions outside Acts? In several passages within Septuagint Psalms the phrase *οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον* appears to be used as

(cf. *Jdt.* 14:10; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5; Juvenal 14. 96-104; *CD* 14.3-6). The view that some proselytes were allowed to remain uncircumcised has little evidence to support it (*contra* McEleney, "Conversion" 328-33; Murphy-O'Connor, "Jewish Mission" 34). For critique of this view, see John Nolland, "Uncircumcised Proselytes?" *JSS* 12 (1981) 173-94, and Cohen, "Boundary" 26-28. The arguments that the use of *προσήλυτος* in Acts 13:43 reflects carelessness on Luke's part (B. Lifshitz, *Donateurs et Fondateurs dans les Synagogues Juives* [Paris: Gabalda, 1967] 79; K. Romaniuk, "Die 'Gottesfürchtigen' im Neuen Testament," *Ägyptus* 44 [1964] 81) or even a later gloss (K.G. Kuhn, "προσήλυτος" *ThW* 6 [1959] 743) are gratuitous.

⁵⁰ 17:4: *τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν* [i.e. *Ἰουδαίων* cf. 17:1] . . . *τῶν τε σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων*; 17:17: *τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις*. Wilcox's suggestion ("God-Fearers" 112-113) that in Ac 17:17 *σεβομένοις* may merely provide a further description of the Jews is impossible in view of the repetition of the article (see n. 47 above); rightly Trebilco, *Communities* 151.

⁵¹ In view of 17:4, where the attributive *σεβόμενος* identifies the Greeks to whom Paul preaches in the synagogue with this group, the "Greeks" in the synagogues of the Jews mentioned elsewhere in Acts (14:1, 17:12, 18:4) most likely included proselytes, not partial adherents only (*contra* Trebilco, *Communities* 150-51; Siebert, "Gottesfürchtige" 138).

a special designation for gentile believers in the Lord. This appears evident from the fact that those designated “God-fearers” are distinguished from Israelites, priests, and Levites.⁵² But are they exclusively sympathizers? This would seem impossible, for, as in Acts 13:16, these fearers of God are specifically distinguished from *Israelites*, a term applicable only to native Jews.⁵³ The natural assumption, therefore, is that these fearers of God must have included proselytes, who otherwise would be inexplicably omitted from mention in favor of partial adherents.

Josephus attributes the wealth of the temple to the contributions of “all the Jews and worshippers of God throughout the inhabited world” (πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην Ἰουδαίων καὶ σεβομένων τὸν θεόν).⁵⁴ As in Acts, those called σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν are affiliated with the Jews yet distinguished from them.⁵⁵ It is possible that Josephus thinks exclusively of semi-converts.⁵⁶ Elsewhere in Josephus’ narrative Ananias assures Izates of his ability θεὸν σέβειν even without being circumcised.⁵⁷ Moreover, donations to the temple were made

⁵² LXX Ps 113:17-21 (=MT 115:9-13), 117:2-4 (=MT 118:2-4), 134:19-20 (=MT 135:19-20). Cf. Max Löhr, *Der Missionsgedanke im alten Testament* (Freiburg: J.C.B. Mohr, 1896) 33; Hans Joachim Kraus, *Psalmen* (2 vols.; BKAT 15; 4th ed.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972) 2.789, 804; Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962) 725 (cf. p. 721). This is disputed by J. Becker, *Gottesfurcht im Alten Testament* (AnBib 25; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965) 155-60, and Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (Waco, TX: Word, 1983) 108.

⁵³ See n. 48 above and the references collected there.

⁵⁴ *Ant.* 14.110.

⁵⁵ K. Lake commits a schoolboy error when he insists that the understanding of σεβομένων τὸν θεόν as a group distinct from the Jews “would require a τῶν before σεβομένων” (*Acts* 8:5). The presence of one article with two substantives associates the substantives but does not identify them (cf. R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache* [2 vols.; Hannover: Hahnsche, 1966] 2.1.611-13; F. Blass, A. Debrunner, F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* [16th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984] 276; Robertson, *Grammar* 785-88). While a hendiadys is possible here, it is not likely; the interpretation of Lake (“all the Jews worshipping God throughout the world”) would normally require the construction πάντων τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην σεβομένων τὸν θεόν. Cf. R. Marcus, “The Sebomenoi in Josephus,” *Jewish Social Studies* 14 (1952) 247-50; McEleney, “Conversion” 328; Collins, “Symbol” 181; Trebilco, *Communities* 148.

⁵⁶ So McEleney, “Conversion” 328; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 350; Segal, *Paul the Convert* 93; Sevenster, *Roots* 198; Trebilco, *Communities* 148; Siegert, “Gottesfürchtige” 127.

⁵⁷ *Ant.* 20.41.

by sympathizers (cf. *Arist.* 42; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.50). Yet Josephus must also have had in mind the temple tax, which was required of all adult males, both native Jews and proselytes.⁵⁸ It would be strange if Josephus were to highlight the contributions of partial adherents and entirely pass over those of full converts. Josephus thus most likely includes proselytes under this term as well as lesser adherents.⁵⁹ The elasticity of the term is illustrated by Josephus' use of the similar expression *θεοσεβής* to describe Poppaea Sabina, the wife of Nero.⁶⁰ Josephus gives no indication that Poppaea was religiously attracted to Judaism; he rather appears here to employ the term of Poppaea as of one who was friendly to the Jews and benefitted them.⁶¹

A second-century inscription from Panticapaeum in the Bosporus refers to "the synagogue of Jews and worshippers of God" (*τῆς συναγωγῆς τῆς Ἰουδαίων καὶ θεὸν σέβων*).⁶² As in Josephus (*Ant.* 14.110) and Acts, these "worshippers of God" are distinguished from the Jews and thus presumably refer to a particular class of gentile. They are usually identified as "sympathizers."⁶³ An inscription from the theatre at Miletus, dating from the Roman period, similarly designates certain seats as *τόπος Εἰουδέων τῶν καὶ θεοσέβιον*.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5, who says of gentile proselytes: *pessimus quisque, spretis religionibus patriis, tributa et stipes illuc congerebant*; see also on this requirement *b. Seqal.* 1.6.

⁵⁹ Josephus studiously avoids the word *προσήλυτος*; cf. Lerle, *Proselytenwerbung* 27, 32.

⁶⁰ *Ant.* 20.195.

⁶¹ See M.H. Williams, "'Θεοσεβής γὰρ ἦν'—The Jewish Tendencies of Poppaea Sabina," *JTS* 39 (1988) 97-111; cf. Collins, "Symbol" 181; Siegert, "Gottesfürchtige" 160-61; less clearly Matthews, *Converts* 33-35.

⁶² *CIJ*, Prolegomenon pp. 65-66; Heinz Bellen, "Συναγωγή τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ θεοσεβῶν: Die Aussage einer bosporanischen Freilassunginschrift (*CIRB* 71) zum Problem der 'Gottfürchtigen,'" *JAC* 8/9 (1965-66) 171-76; B. Lifshitz, "Notes d'épigraphie grecque," *RB* 76 (1969) 95-96. Both Bellen and Lifshitz emend the irregular construction *θεὸν σέβων* to the adjective *θεοσεβῶν* (*CIJ*, Prolegomenon p. 65; "Notes" 95-96; *Συναγωγή* 171-76). The emendation is suspect, for the accusative *θεὸν* rather suggests that *σέβων* be understood as a deviant participle form equivalent to *σεβόντων* or *σεβομένων*.

⁶³ E.g. Figueras, "Epigraphic Evidence" 202-203; Cohen, "Boundary" 32; Rajak, "Groups" 259; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 359; Gager, "Jews" 97; Trebilco, *Communities* 156.

⁶⁴ *CIJ* 748; see also Hildebrecht Hommel, "Juden und Christen im kaiserzeitlichen Milet," *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts zu Istanbul* 25 (1975)

In light of the Panticapaeum inscription and *Antiquities* 14.110, it is likely that in this semi-literate inscription καί has been erroneously transposed after the article (a type of error not unusual in inscriptions of the period), and that we are thus to think of two groups, and to translate, as several scholars have suggested, “place of the Jews and the God-fearers.”⁶⁵ If this reading is correct, the worshippers of God referred to in this inscription are contrasted with Jews and are thus by implication gentiles. They too, like the “worshippers of God” at Panticapaeum, are frequently identified as exclusively gentile “sympathizers.”⁶⁶ This is possible; however, the evidence examined thus far would suggest that perhaps the term “worshippers of God” is used in these inscriptions more broadly, to include proselytes as well as sympathizers. This is also suggested by the context of the Panticapaeum inscription, where the worshippers of God are accorded joint responsibility for the synagogue.

The recently published memorial inscription from Aphrodisias in Asia Minor has provided important new evidence for the existence of gentile sympathizers in antiquity.⁶⁷ The inscription, which dates to approximately the beginning of the third century, apparently recognizes contributors to a project or institution of some kind (the precise nature of which is unclear).⁶⁸ Face *a* of the inscription con-

167-95; first published in Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (New York: Harper, 1927) 451-52.

⁶⁵ So Figueras, “Epigraphic Evidence” 202; Trebilco, *Communities* 159-62; Rajak, “Groups” 258; Stanton, “Neglected Evidence” 44; E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (4th ed.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1909) 3.174. The epithet θεοσέβιον (sic) is taken as a further description of the Jews by Frey (*CIJ* 748); Louis Robert, *Nouvelles Inscriptions de Sardes* (Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et l’Orient, 1964) 41; Deissmann, *Light* 452; McEleney, “Conversion” 326-27; and Siegert, “Gottesfürchtige” 159.

⁶⁶ So Figueras, “Epigraphic Evidence” 202; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 361; Rajak, “Groups” 258; Cohen, “Boundary” 32; Gager, “Jews” 97; Trebilco, *Communities* 161-62.

⁶⁷ On the inscription, see Irina A. Levinskaya, “The Inscription from Aphrodisias and the Problem of God-Fearers,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990) 315-16; Judith M. Lieu, “Do God-Fearers Make Good Christians?” *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation* (FS Michael D. Goulder; eds. Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, David E. Orton; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 336-337; Segal, *Paul the Convert* 94; Trebilco, *Communities* 152-54; William Dalton, “Jewish Mission to Gentiles,” *Pacifica* 5 (1992) 97; Figueras, “Epigraphic Evidence” 201; McKnight, *Light* 112-113; Rajak, “Groups” 257-59; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 367-69; E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.- A.D. 135)* (eds. G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Goodman; Edinburgh: Clark, 1986) III/I, 166; Gager, “Jews” 97-99.

⁶⁸ Perhaps, as Reynolds and Tannenbaum suggest, this was a soup kitchen

tains a list of sixteen persons with clearly Jewish names, together with the names of three persons identified as proselytes (lines 13, 17, 22), and two persons identified as θεοσεβείς (lines 19-20). Face *b* of the inscription contains a list of fifty-four Jewish names, followed by the words καὶ ὅσοι θεοσεβείς, introducing a list of fifty-two Greek or Graeco-Roman names (lines 34ff.).

Those designated θεοσεβείς clearly have a recognized relationship to the Jews of the city. Yet they are also clearly not full converts, inasmuch as the inscription seems clearly to differentiate between the terms προσήλυτος and θεοσεβής. It is possible that these were semi-converts, like Cornelius in Acts 10 and Izates in the account of Josephus.⁶⁹ However, another explanation is also possible. Those identified as θεοσεβείς are generally of a rather high economic status, and a number of them apparently occupied important places within the city of Aphrodisias (the first nine listed on face *b* were city councilors). It is therefore plausible that θεοσεβείς is here merely a complimentary designation for generous gentile donors, and that those so designated were, as A.T. Kraabel suggests, “nothing more than gentile ‘good neighbors’ whom the local Jews wanted to honor.”⁷⁰ Paul Trebilco counters that the use of θεοσεβής as a complimentary term for gentile benefactors “is completely beyond the known Jewish meaning of θεοσεβής.”⁷¹ But in fact the term was elastic enough to be used in this way, and we have seen that this is precisely the sense

for the poor (*Godfearers* 26-28). However, as Tessa Rajak has shown, evidence for analogous charitable foundations is lacking elsewhere in Jewish benefaction inscriptions in the Graeco-Roman diaspora (“Benefactors in the Greco-Jewish Diaspora,” *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion* [FS Martin Hengel; eds. Hubert Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, P. Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996] 1.310-319). Lieu (“God-Fearers” 336) also expresses doubts regarding this aspect of the editors’ interpretation of the inscription.

⁶⁹ So Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 367-69; Gager, “Jews” 98-99; Trebilco, *Communities* 152-54; de Boer, “God-Fearers” 62-63; many others.

⁷⁰ Kraabel, “*Synagoga Caeca*” 231-32; cf. Lieu, “God-Fearers” 336-337; Tessa Rajak, “The Synagogue Within the Graeco-Roman City,” *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction during the Graeco-Roman Period* (ed. Steven Fine; London/New York: Routledge, 1999) 168-169. The status of several of the donors as city councilors would presumably necessitate their participation in public worship of the gods (cf. Paula Fredriksen, “Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2,” *Recruitment, Conquest and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early Christianity, and the Graeco-Roman World* [eds. P. Borgen, V.K. Robbins, D.B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars, 1998] 218-220).

⁷¹ Trebilco, *Communities* 251 (n. 38).

in which Josephus employs the term of Poppaea. It is also possible that θεοσεβείς may refer to differing levels of attachment within the Aphrodisias inscription itself. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has argued that the use of θεοσεβείς in connection with the fifty-two persons on face *b* of the inscription most likely represents nothing more than a patronal relationship to a Jewish project.⁷² However, Murphy-O'Connor contends that the two θεοσεβείς listed on face *a* are by contrast “religiously committed” and “participate fully in the life of the synagogue,” on the assumption that the δεκανία τῶν φιλοματῶ[ν] τῶν κὲ παντευλογ[ούντων] with which their names are connected was “a Jewish group which met for prayer and study.”⁷³ That assumption is problematic.⁷⁴ The precise nature of their attachment is simply not possible to determine with any certainty.

In sum, the accumulated evidence from literature and inscriptions in antiquity for the existence of partially-committed gentile “fearers of God” or “worshippers of God” undermines the thesis of Kraabel and strongly supports the historicity of Luke’s portrayal. At the same time, the evidence available from both the book of Acts and other literature and inscriptions suggests that in antiquity the terms “fearer of God” and “worshipper of God” were capable of a variety of applications, and were not, as commonly supposed, univocal designations for a class of semi-converts. The term φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν is used by Luke to describe Cornelius, an uncircumcised gentile who apparently worshipped the God of the Jews exclusively (Acts 10:2; 10:22; 10:35).⁷⁵ However, a little later in his narrative he also uses the term of proselytes, or, as is more likely, of a mixed group of proselytes and partial adherents (13:16; 13:26). The terms θεὸν σέβειν and θεοσεβής are used in *Antiquities* 20.41 and in the Aphrodisias inscription with specific reference to non-proselytes. In the Izates passage (*Ant.* 20.41) the phrase clearly refers to a partial

⁷² “Lots of God-Fearers? *Theosebeis* in the Aphrodisias Inscription,” *RB* 99 (1992) 421-24.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 423.

⁷⁴ On the difficulties involved with this interpretation, see Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 368; Lieu, “God-Fearers” 336-337.

⁷⁵ It is, on the other hand, possible that Luke intends the reader to understand that prior to his Christian conversion, the God-fearer Cornelius, as a Roman military officer, would have participated in the pagan cultus. So Fredriksen (“Judaism” 219), who suggests that God-fearers generally were not expected to forego idolatry as proselytes were (218-220, 229).

convert. But in the Aphrodisias inscription it is unclear whether any or all of those so designated were attracted to the worship of the God of the Jews, or in fact had some other relationship to the Jews of the city. Josephus' use of the term with reference to Poppaea Sabina shows that the term could in certain contexts imply no more than a friendly or patronal relationship with the Jewish community. Yet the terms involved could at the other extreme be used of full proselytes (Acts 13:43).⁷⁶ Often in Acts (13:50; 16:14; 17:4; 17:17; 18:7) and other literature and inscriptions from the period it is unclear whether the persons referred to by these terms are proselytes, sympathizers, or a mixed group made up of both proselytes and sympathizers. The expressions φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος [τὸν θεόν] were apparently broad terms that could be used of any gentile adherent and of a wide variety of attachments, from full conversion to active assistance of the Jewish community.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ The term in 13:43 certainly includes proselytes, although it is probable that Luke understood this group as augmented by sympathizers as well (see the discussion above). The use of such terms for proselytes as well as partial adherents, and the general restriction of the term Ἰουδαῖος to Jews by birth which this usage attests (cf. Acts 2:11), may suggest that proselytes were not always considered in every sense fully Jewish or equal in every respect to native-born Jews. This was certainly the case at Qumran (CD 14.3-6; 11QT 39:5-7); see Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Non-Jews in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality* (FS James A. Sanders; eds. Craig A. Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 162, 169-170. David A. Baer's detailed exegetical treatment of LXX Isa 66 provides evidence that this was the case for the translator of LXX Isaiah as well (*When We All Go Home: Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56-66* [JSOTSS 318; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001] 231-276). On the ambiguous status of the proselyte in antiquity, cf. Cohen, "Boundary" 29-30; Wilcox, "God-Fearers" 108-109; Stanton, "Neglected Evidence" 49; and Terrence L. Donaldson, "Jerusalem Ossuary Inscriptions and the Status of Jewish Proselytes," *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity* (ESCJ 9; eds. Stephen G. Wilson and Michael Desjardins; Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2000) 372-388.

⁷⁷ The very ambiguity of the terms involved may help to explain Luke's predilection for them within the book of Acts. The important theological role played by the God-fearers within Luke's narrative in anchoring the beginnings of the gentile mission within the Jewish people is widely recognized (cf. Kraabel, "Disappearance" 120-121). But additionally, by using this terminology applicable to both uncircumcised and circumcised gentile adherents in his descriptions of the synagogues in which Paul preached, Luke subtly relativizes the importance of circumcision even within the Jewish community itself, and prepares the reader for the apostles' abandonment of this requirement (Acts 15:1-31), and the eventual disassociation of the Christian movement from the Jewish community (Acts 18:6-7; 19:9; 28:28). For a different assessment of the literary role of the God-fearers in Acts, see Gary Gilbert, "The Disappearance of the Gentiles: God-Fearers and the Image of the

1.3.2 *The Number of Partial Converts in Antiquity*

While the support of the Jewish community offered by some God-fearers such as Poppaea (and perhaps the benefactors of the synagogue at Aphrodisias) apparently did not involve any personal religious commitment to Judaism on their part, other God-fearers such as Cornelius (Acts 10:2; 10:22; 10:35) and Izates (*Ant.* 20.34-48) were religiously committed, and may be described as partial converts. Other probable semi-converts whom Luke mentions are the unnamed centurion in Luke 7:1-10, and Sergius Paulus in Acts 13:6-7, who apparently had some form of partial commitment to Judaism but was almost certainly not a proselyte.

How many partial converts such as this existed on the fringes of the Jewish community? It is generally supposed that these partially-committed "God-fearers" were extremely numerous, far more numerous than proselytes, and thus represented the Jewish mission's greatest success.⁷⁸ The vast number of such sympathizers has seemed an inescapable conclusion from such passages as the following from Josephus' apology against Apion:

Multitudes have for a long time now been eager to imitate our religion, and there is no city whatsoever, be it Greek or barbarian, nor any nation, where our custom of resting on the seventh day has not spread, and where the fasts, and lightings of lamps, and many of our food prohibitions, have not come to be observed . . . just as God permeates all the universe, so the law has spread its influence among all people.⁷⁹

However, it hardly follows from such passages that vast numbers

Jews in Luke-Acts," *Putting Body and Soul Together* (FS Robin Scroggs; eds. Virginia Wiles, Alexandra Brown, Graydon F. Snyder; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1997) 172-184.

⁷⁸ E.g. Trebilco, *Communities* 154 ("the number of God-worshippers in some ancient synagogues was often considerably greater than the number of proselytes"); Sevenster, *Roots* 198 ("the natural assumption is that there were many more sympathizers than true proselytes"); Segal, *Paul the Convert* 95 ("God-fearers nonetheless existed, possibly in large numbers"); George LaPiana, "Foreign Groups in Rome during the First Century of the Empire," *HTR* 20 (1927) 391 ("more numerous"); Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 348 ("numerous"); Shaye Cohen, "Conversion to Judaism in Historical Perspective: From Biblical Israel to Postbiblical Judaism," *Conservative Judaism* 36, 4 (1983) 36-37 ("very numerous"); Finn, "God-fearers" 81 ("numerous"); Dahl, *Volk Gottes* 73. McKnight is agnostic on the number of God-fearers (*Light* 100).

⁷⁹ Josephus, *Ap.* 2.282, 284.

of sympathizers such as Cornelius or Izates existed in antiquity. To be sure, the passage in *Contra Apionem* cited immediately above, and similar passages (e.g. Philo, *De vita Mosis* 2.17-24; Josephus, *Ap.* 1.166-67), prove that many gentiles imitated Jewish customs, particularly the Sabbath, fasts, lighting of lamps and certain food laws. It might seem self-evident that the adoption of specifically Jewish practices such as Sabbath observance must have entailed some sort of relationship or sympathy with the Jewish community.⁸⁰ But is such an assumption warranted?

The adoption of Jewish customs, particularly the observance of the Sabbath, is lampooned by Persius (*Sat.* 5.179-184) and Juvenal (14.96-106). The Sabbath-keeping father described in the Juvenal passage is almost universally regarded as a sympathizer or semi-convert.⁸¹ What is seldom noticed, however, is that Juvenal attributes the renunciation of polytheism solely to the son, who converts to Judaism (14.97-104), not the father, who apparently observes the Sabbath and certain food laws while remaining a pagan. The sting of their satire is considerably sharpened when it is recognized that the figures whom Juvenal and Persius criticize are assumed to be themselves unsympathetic to Jews and Judaism.

This is for the modern mind a rather surprising situation, but one for which there is good evidence elsewhere. In criticizing Roman popular religion, Seneca censures the lighting of lamps on the Sabbath as but one item in a litany of popular abuses, together with such observances as the offering of towels to Jupiter and mirrors to Juno.⁸² The lighting of lamps is in this passage clearly treated as a common practice within *Roman* popular religion, not a custom confined to Jews and Jewish sympathizers. Horace's friend Fuscus

⁸⁰ This is widely assumed, e.g. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 342-82; Bedell, "Mission" 26; Mason, "Invitation" 216; Riesner, "Jewish Mission" 228-230; Fredriksen, "Judaism" 218; Overman, "God-Fearers" 149-51; Finn, "God-fearers" 81; Borgen, "Proselytes" 59-63; de Boer, "God-Fearers" 58-59.

⁸¹ So Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 300; Murphy-O'Connor, "Jewish Mission" 34; McKnight, *Light* 113; Mason, "Invitation" 189; Riesner, "Jewish Mission" 230; Barnett, "Jewish Mission" 266; Goldenberg, *Nations* 141 (n. 64); Sevenster, *Roots* 198; Conzelmann, *Jews-Gentiles-Christians* 107; Overman, "God-Fearers" 150-51; Finn, "God-fearers" 81; de Boer, "God-Fearers" 60; Trebilco, *Communities* 149; Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 15-16; Axenfeld, "Propaganda" 57; Moore, *Judaism* 325; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 66; Dahl, *Volk Gottes* 73.

⁸² Seneca, *Ep.* 95.47-48.

avers scruples of Sabbath observance as a pretext for his refusal to rescue the poet from a talkative acquaintance; he is, he excuses himself, a little weaker than his unsuperstitious friend, one of many like him (*sum paulo infirmior, unus multorum*).⁸³ Tertullian responds to charges of sun worship by remarking that it no more follows from the Christian practice of Sunday worship and of prayer toward the east that Christians reverence the sun, than it follows from the Romans' observance of the Sabbath that they practice Judaism, of which in fact they are ignorant (*exorbitantes et ipsi a Iudaico more, quem ignorant*).⁸⁴ The rather surprising picture that emerges is one in which Jewish customs, readily recognizable as Jewish, were widely practiced by gentiles, but in the context of the polytheistic popular religion, and by gentiles who were nonetheless not particularly sympathetic, and perhaps even averse, to the Jewish community and its manner of life.

The pagan practice of Sabbath observance is perhaps in part to be explained by the identification in the popular mind of the Sabbath with the day of Saturn.⁸⁵ But Seneca complains that the vast majority of gentiles who practice Jewish customs do not even know why they do so!⁸⁶ In any case, to regard this widespread practice as evidence of numerous gentile sympathizers or semi-converts is a flat misreading of the sources.⁸⁷ Such partial converts without doubt existed, but their numbers are very difficult to estimate.

Yet we do know that a group of proselytes or sympathizers, or more likely a group made up of both, of whatever size, was associated with the Jewish community at Philippi (Acts 16:14), Thessalonica (17:4),

⁸³ Horace, *Sat.* 1.9.68-72.

⁸⁴ Tertullian, *Apol.* 16; *ad nat.* 1.13; cf. Seneca, *apud* Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 6.11, and see John Nolland, "Do Romans Observe Jewish Customs? (Tertullian, *Ad Nat.* 1.13; *Apol.* 16)," *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979) 1-11. For further evidence of Sabbath-keeping by pagans, cf. Tibullus, *Eleg.* 1.3.17-18; Suetonius, *Tib.* 32; and possibly *Aug.* 76.2. See also Lieu, "God-Fearers" 341.

⁸⁵ Cf. Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 37.16; Tibullus, *Eleg.* 1.3.17-18; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4.

⁸⁶ Seneca, *apud* Augustine, *De civ. Dei.* 6.11; cf. Tertullian, *Apol.* 16 (*Iudaico more, quem ignorant*). For the theological ramifications of the practice in Philo's mind, see chapter three below.

⁸⁷ Other texts which are commonly cited in order to prove the existence of a numerous class of sympathizers or semi-converts either refer to proselytes (Epictetus, *Diss.* 2.9.19-21; Suetonius, *Tib.* 36; Philo, *Quaest. in Ex.* 22; Petronius, *Frag.* 37) or to political support of the Jews in Syria (Josephus, *War* 2.463), or are simply too unclear to support any firm conclusions (Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2; Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* 67.14.2).

Athens (17:17), Corinth (18:4, 7), Iconium (14:1), Berea (17:12), Panticapaeum (*CIJ*, Prol. 65-66), Miletus (*CIJ* 748), and that, as Josephus says, such gentile “fearers of God” existed “throughout the inhabited world” (*Ant.* 14.110).⁸⁸ There is, to be sure, little or no evidence to support Georgi’s claim that these conversions to Judaism were comparable in scope to the missionary gains of the early church. With the important exceptions of Antioch and Damascus, there is nothing comparable in our sources for Jewish proselytism to the large-scale conversions which both pagan and Christian sources attribute to the mission of the early church.⁸⁹ By the middle of the second century at least, Christians simply took for granted that their numbers far exceeded those of the entire Jewish population worldwide.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, we may plausibly infer a considerable number of converts to Judaism in antiquity, both proselytes and partial adherents.

1.4 *Evidence of Jewish Missionary Activity*

We have seen evidence of at least a fair number of converts to Judaism during the second temple period. It is often assumed that the existence of converts presupposes the existence of an aggressive Jewish missionary movement. Yet evidence for Jewish proselytizing activity in antiquity is extremely limited. The evidence usually proposed for such activity is confined to a handful of passages, most of them by non-Jewish authors.

The earliest assumed evidence of Jewish missionary activity is provided by a passage within Horace’s fourth satire. In the conclusion of the poem, Horace warns his critics that if they refuse to indulge his penchant for satire, he and his fellow satirists will force them to become poets themselves—“and we will compel you, just like the

⁸⁸ While the cumulative evidence decisively supports (against Kraabel) the authenticity of Acts’ portrayal of the existence of God-fearers within Jewish communities, one must at the same time be wary of exaggerating the evidence which Acts provides of proselytes and God-fearers in the synagogues visited by Paul. Luke’s narrative does not necessarily imply vast numbers of such adherents, and one cannot assume that the importance attached to these adherents within Luke’s literary presentation, which reflects Luke’s intense interest in gentile mission, was shared by his contemporaries.

⁸⁹ E.g. Acts 19:23-27; Pliny, *Ep.* 96.9-10; Tacitus, *Annales* 15.44.

⁹⁰ 2 *Clement* 2.3; Irenaeus, *Dem.* 94; Eusebius, *Hist. Ecc.* 1.4.2.

Jews do, to become a member of this throng” (*ac veluti te Iudaei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam*).⁹¹

Horace’s off-hand remark is generally regarded as clear evidence that Jews took the initiative in conversion, and aggressively sought gentile adherents.⁹² According to J.N. Sevenster, this passage is perhaps the most important ancient testimonial to such proselytizing activity on the part of Jews.⁹³ Many authors see in this passage not merely evidence of active proselytizing but an allusion to the preaching activity of Jewish missionaries.⁹⁴ Other writers, however, consider Horace to refer to political efforts on the part of Jews (cf. Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28), and dismiss the passage as evidence for gentile conversion altogether.⁹⁵

This latter view depends upon a translation of *in hanc concedere turbam* (line 143) which understands the phrase to mean, not “to become a member of this throng” but only “to yield with regard to this throng.”⁹⁶ The translation, however, is impossible: *concedere* and *in* when proximate are always associated, and when associated, always signify “join,” never “yield.”⁹⁷ Such a separation as Nolland proposes of the preposition *in* from its associated verb *concedere* is in fact an unintelligible barbarism which Horace could hardly have written. Horace threatens to force his critics, not merely to *permit* his writing of satire, but to *join* him in it.

The allusion in the phrase *in hanc concedere turbam* to the phenomenon of conversion to Judaism is thus unmistakable; but what are we to make of Horace’s reference to compulsion (*cogemus*)? Many scholars see an allusion here to Jewish aggressiveness in seeking

⁹¹ *Sermones* 1.4.142-43.

⁹² Cf. Axenfeld, “Propaganda” 54; Kasting, *Anfänge* 17; Lerle, *Proselytenwerbung* 14; Hoening, *Conversion* 44; de Ridder, *Dispersion* 94.

⁹³ Sevenster, *Roots* 203-204.

⁹⁴ E.g. Corrington, *Divine Man* 31-32, 190; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 299, 302; Georgi, *Opponents* 96-97; Conzelmann, *Gentiles-Jews-Christians* 104-105; Schoeps, *Paul* 221; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 66; Dalton, “Jews and Gentiles” 57.

⁹⁵ This reading of the passage was first proposed by J. Nolland, “Proselytism or Politics in Horace, Satires I, 4, 138-43,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979) 347-55; he is followed by Kraabel, “Six” 11; Collins, “Symbol” 171 (n. 26); McKnight, *Light* 64; Cohen, “Missionary Religion” 17; Murphy-O’Connor, “Jewish Mission” 38; and Riesner, “Jewish Mission” 229.

⁹⁶ So Nolland, “Proselytism” 349-51.

⁹⁷ Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.1; Ulpianus, *Dig.* 50.16.27.

conversions.⁹⁸ But it is perhaps more likely that Horace alludes to the Jewish requirement that potential adherents renounce the pagan gods and worship the God of the Jews exclusively. To a Roman such as Horace, who regarded the gods of the various nations as identifiable, the Jewish insistence upon conversion was entirely novel.⁹⁹ The point of Horace's allusion to compulsion would then lie, not in the aggressiveness, but in the exclusivism of Judaism. If so, the passage does provide further evidence for conversion of gentiles, and for the exclusive demands which were made upon them, but it does not, as commonly supposed, provide any evidence for Jewish missionaries or Jewish proselytizing activity.

It is also possible that Horace alludes to the forced conversions of conquered neighboring peoples under the Hasmonean kings Hyrcanus and Aristobulus (*Ant.* 13.254-258, 318-319; 13.395-397). In any case, these forced conversions within the land of Palestine are hardly to be considered, with Peder Borgen, as "an extreme form of 'aggressive missionary activity.'"¹⁰⁰ The motive for this practice was apparently not a consciousness of mission, but concern for the purity of the land, as *Vita* 112-113 and 149-154 suggest.

A similar antipathy to Jewish exclusivism is expressed by the historian Tacitus:

Those who have converted to their customs follow the same practice [i.e. of circumcision], and the first instruction they receive is to despise the gods, to renounce their country, and to regard parents, children and brothers as nothing. (*Hist.* 5.5)¹⁰¹

Sevenster points to Tacitus' mention of instruction (*imbuuntur*) as proof of active proselytizing by Jews.¹⁰² But clearly the reference is not to Jewish *propaganda* or preaching directed toward gentiles, but to the *instruction* given new converts. The passage thus furnishes no evidence of Jewish proselytizing activity. However, the passage does provide important additional evidence for the Jewish insistence,

⁹⁸ E.g. Kasting, *Anfänge* 17; de Ridder, *Dipersion* 94; Schoeps, *Paul* 221; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 66; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 299, 302; Sevenster, *Roots* 203-204.

⁹⁹ Edward P. Morris, *Horace: Satires and Epistles* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1967) 84.

¹⁰⁰ "Proselytes" 68.

¹⁰¹ See for discussion of Tacitus' treatment of the Jews in *Hist.* 5.1-13, Conzelmann, *Gentiles-Jews-Christians* 123-33.

¹⁰² Sevenster, *Roots* 204.

unique in antiquity, on conversion, and for the existence of gentiles willing to take this step.

The expulsion of Jews from Rome in 19 C.E. is reported by a number of ancient authors.¹⁰³ The passages in Tacitus, Suetonius and Seneca do not specify the motive for the action, but imply that this measure was related to the conversion of gentiles, and Dio explicitly gives this as the reason for the expulsion. It is almost certain that Josephus (*Ant.* 18.81-84), in assigning the blame for the expulsion solely to “the wickedness of four men” (18.84), is purposely suppressing the fact that conversion of Romans was the primary reason for the action, in view of the generally hesitant and unenthusiastic attitude toward gentile conversion which Josephus displays throughout his works.¹⁰⁴ The reports of Dio, Tacitus, Suetonius and Seneca are thus important testimonials to the existence of converts at Rome. But do they provide evidence that these conversions were the result of Jewish missionary activity? Dio does report that the Jews were “converting many of the natives to their customs” (συχνοὺς τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἐς τὰ σφέτερα ἔθη μεθιστάντων). Valerius Maximus, writing in the reign of Tiberius, similarly relates that in 139 B.C.E. the Jews were expelled from Rome for attempting to convert Romans (*qui Romanis sacra sua tradere conati erant*).¹⁰⁵ However, one wonders whether the language of Dio and Valerius is to be pressed as evidence of active

¹⁰³ Tacitus, *Annales* 2.85; Suetonius, *Tib.* 36; Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* 57.18.5; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.81-84; a possible allusion in Seneca, *Ep.* 108.22.

¹⁰⁴ This tendency of Josephus is demonstrated by Shaye J.D. Cohen, “Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus,” *HTR* 80 (1987) 409-30 (see esp. 412-18, 421-23, and 427-30). Steve Mason (“Invitation” 196-228) attempts to show that both the *Antiquities* and *Contra Apionem* were written with a missionary purpose, but his reading of Josephus is selective, and his arguments unconvincing (cf. idem, “Should Any Wish to Enquire Further’ [*Ant.* 1.25]: The Aim and Audience of Josephus’ *Judean Antiquities/Life*,” *Understanding Josephus: Seven Perspectives* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998] 64-103). On the apologetic character of Josephus’ account of the expulsion, cf. Horst R. Moehring, “The Persecution of the Jews and the Adherents of the Isis Cult at Rome A.D. 19,” *NovT* 3 (1959) 293-304; Matthews, *Converts* 10-28.

¹⁰⁵ *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* 1.3.3, according to the epitome (fifth-sixth century) of Januarius Nepotianus. The epitome of Julius Paris (fourth century) states that the Jews were expelled for attempting to infect the Roman customs with the cult of “Jupiter Sabazius” (*qui Sabazi Iovis cultu Romanos inficere mores conati sunt*). The reliability of either version is extremely questionable (cf. LaPiana, “Foreign Groups” 344; Carleton Paget, “Proselytism” 87), but whether reliable or not, the passage reveals the familiarity of the Romans with gentile conversions and their uneasiness with the phenomenon, by the time of Tiberius if not earlier.

proselytizing.¹⁰⁶ These writers indicate that the Jewish community at Rome made converts, but their language hardly demands the inference that Roman Jews aggressively sought adherents, much less that Jewish missionaries were active at Rome. At the same time, it seems reasonable to conclude that gentile converts were eagerly received by the Jewish community at Rome.

Josephus' account of the conversion of Izates, king of Adiabene (*Ant.* 20.34-48), is well-known, and need not be rehearsed here. Our interest is in the evidence this episode provides for Jewish missionary activity. Josephus describes the activity of a certain Ananias:

Now when Izates was spending time at Charax Spasini, a certain Jewish merchant named Ananias got among the wives of the king and was teaching them to worship God as the Jews do, and indeed, after he had through them come to the knowledge of Izates, he persuaded him likewise. (20.34-35)

Ananias is frequently portrayed as a wandering missionary.¹⁰⁷ Josephus, however, describes him as a traveling Jewish merchant eager to teach Judaism to certain women of the royal court. There is nothing in Josephus' account to suggest that Ananias was involved in the sort of planned missionary effort in which Paul engaged (cf. Rom 15:15-29; Gal 1:15-16; 2:9).

It is not clear from Josephus' account whether the recruiting activity of Ananias, or of the unnamed Jew who converted Izates' mother Helena, was commonplace or exceptional.¹⁰⁸ It is also not

¹⁰⁶ As is commonly done, e.g. Carleton Paget, "Proselytism" 88-90; Siegert, "Gottesfürchtige" 144-45; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 301, 303; and Sevenster, *Roots* 204. That Dio and Valerius refer to aggressive proselytizing is assumed even by Collins, "Symbol" 170; McKnight, *Light* 73-74; Cohen, "Missionary Religion" 18; and Kraabel, "Six" 7-8. The statement of Valerius is taken as proof of Jewish missionaries at Rome by Georgi, *Opponents* 177 (n. 11), Dalton, "Jews and Gentiles" 57, and Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 24-31.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Corrington, *Divine Man* 188; Georgi, *Opponents* 100; Derwacter, *Preparing* 86-90; Carleton Paget, "Proselytism" 90-91 (with qualifications).

¹⁰⁸ Our lack of other evidence for such activity might suggest the latter; cf. McKnight, *Light* 75; Kasting, *Anfänge* 24. Paul Bowers cautions against "the frequent tendency . . . to construct from this one example [of Ananias] a complete typology of the proselyte effort" ("Paul and Religious Propaganda in the First Century," *NovT* 22 [1980] 321). But according to Mason "the story assumes the ubiquity of Judeans who are willing to guide foreigners through conversion" ("Invitation" 207). The picture is complicated, moreover, by Josephus' tendency elsewhere to downplay conversion (see above p. 50), and the apparent suspension of this tendency in *Ant.*

quite clear how far the activity of Ananias should be characterized as aggressive. Josephus does not tell us whether Ananias imposed himself upon the wives of Monobazus or, like the wife of Potiphar in *Testament of Joseph* 4.4-5, they themselves requested instruction. At any rate it is they, not Ananias, who take the initiative in introducing Izates to him (20.35). Further, when Izates, after being persuaded (συνανέπεισεν, 20.35) by Ananias, decided on his own initiative to convert fully (μεταθέσθαι) and undergo circumcision (20.38), Ananias actively dissuaded him (20.40-42).¹⁰⁹ In any case, the eagerness of Ananias to instruct gentiles in the worship of the God of Israel and lead them to conversion is striking.

A certain Eleazar, a learned interpreter of the Jewish law from Galilee (20.43), comes to Izates and persuades him to undergo circumcision (20.44-46). It is possible that Izates may have summoned Eleazar for instruction.¹¹⁰ Or he may have come on his own initiative, upon hearing of Izates' semi-conversion to Judaism.¹¹¹ In any

20.34-48 (cf. Cohen, "Respect"; but cf. Mason, "Invitation" 205-207). The issues involved require fuller discussion than is possible here.

¹⁰⁹ Izates prior to his circumcision was apparently a partially-committed "God-fearer" similar to Cornelius in Acts 10. On Izates' status prior to his circumcision, see Collins, "Symbol" 178-79; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Conversion of the Royal House of Adiabene in Josephus and Rabbinic Sources," *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity* (eds. Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987) 302-303; Segal, *Paul the Convert* 99-101; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 330, 333, 350-51. Daniel R. Schwartz denies Izates' status as a God-fearer prior to his conversion, but his argument rests upon a misreading of the narrative ("God, Gentiles, and Jewish Law: On Acts 15 and Josephus' Adiabene Narrative," *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion* [FS Martin Hengel; eds. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, P. Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996] 1.265-272). On the political ramifications of Izates' conversion, cf. Jacob Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia. I. The Parthian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1969) 61-67. Ananias' and Helena's reasons for dissuading Izates from circumcision were not theological but practical, and directly related to the exigencies of his situation as king (20.39-40). Ananias did give several theological grounds for the compromise (20.41-42), but the last of these ("God would forgive him" 20.42) seems to imply that under normal circumstances circumcision was necessary (cf. Nolland, "Uncircumcised" 192-94). The result was that Izates' status in his uncircumcised state was rather ambiguous. In the eyes of Ananias, Izates' exceptional circumstances made it possible for him to be a convert even without circumcision (20.41-42). But in the eyes of his subjects (20.39) and (except for a brief period [20.42]!) in his own eyes as well (20.38, 46), Izates prior to his circumcision was something less than a convert to Judaism (*contra* Gary Gilbert, "The Making of a Jew: 'God-fearer' or Convert in the Story of Izates," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 44 [1991] 306-10).

¹¹⁰ As suggested by Cohen, "Missionary Religion" 18.

¹¹¹ As suggested by Axenfeld, "Propaganda" 45.

case, Eleazar is not presented as a missionary; he addresses Izates as one who claims to be in some sense already within the fold and seeks to complete his conversion through a more complete adherence to the law.

The figure of Eleazar may help to illumine the difficult and much-discussed logion of Jesus in Matthew 23:15:

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you traverse sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one, you make him a son of hell twofold more than yourselves.

This saying of Jesus is often regarded as evidence for the existence of itinerant Jewish missionaries who traveled from Palestine to preach to gentiles.¹¹² This view is extremely unlikely, for evidence outside this verse for missionary activity by Palestinian Jews is entirely lacking.¹¹³ Equally unlikely is the suggestion that the verse refers to attempts by Pharisees to convert other Jews to their party.¹¹⁴ A more plausible interpretation of Matthew 23:15 is perhaps suggested by the figure of Eleazar, a Palestinian Jew who after a long journey sought to make the prince Izates a full proselyte (cf. Mt 23:15, ποιῆσαι ἕνα προσήλυτον) through circumcision. On this interpretation, the criticism of Jesus in Matthew 23:15 is directed at Pharisees who, like Eleazar, traveled from Palestine (cf. John 7:35), not to preach to pagans, but to teach individual high-standing sympathizers (cf. Sergius Paulus in Acts 13:6-7) and complete their conversion to Judaism. On this view, which is the only interpretation which explains the passage in terms of known Jewish practices, the verse does not refer to missionary

¹¹² Cf. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 298; Carleton Paget, "Proselytism" 94-98; Corrington, *Divine Man* 187, 190; John T. Green, "Paul's Hermeneutic Versus Its Competitors," *Journal of Religious Thought* 42 (1985/86) 14-15; Derwacter, *Preparing* 42-46; Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 17-19; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 64; Schoeps, *Paul* 221.

¹¹³ Cf. Cohen, "Missionary Religion" 18. As Riesner remarks, "If we had other clear evidence for such a mission, we should interpret the logion in conformity with it, but since such clear evidence is lacking, we should ask if there are other possible or even probable ways of understanding" ("Jewish Mission" 232). The argument is not circular, as Dickson claims (*Mission-Commitment* 39-46). What is significant is not merely the lack of evidence for Jewish missionaries in general, which is of course disputed, but the lack of even alleged evidence for Jewish missionaries who traveled from the land of Palestine.

¹¹⁴ Pace Munck, *Salvation* 267; Goodman, *Mission* 69-74. Not only is there no evidence for such activity by Pharisees, but also the word προσήλυτος, by the first century at least, was a technical term for gentile converts, and could hardly be used with reference to Jews (cf. Philo, *Spec. leg.* 1.51-52; Acts 2:11, 6:5, 13:43).

preaching, whether intramural or extramural, but to a “correcting” activity along the lines of Eleazar in *Antiquities* 20 (cf. Gal 1:7; 2:4; 2:11-13; Acts 15:1).¹¹⁵ Such activity, while not precisely missionary, nonetheless provides evidence of a definite interest in gentiles and their conversion.

1.5 Conclusion

The phenomenon of conversion to Judaism was well-known in antiquity, and proselytes existed throughout much of the known world. The number of proselytes was augmented by partial converts such as Cornelius and Izates, and other sympathizers with various levels of attachment. Although there is no indication that the number of converts was massive, proselytes and sympathizers may have existed in fair numbers.

However, there is little evidence that converts were actively sought by Jews. The texts usually brought forward as proof of Jewish missionary activity in antiquity provide, upon examination, no evidence of Jewish missionaries or of missionary preaching to gentiles, and relatively little evidence of active proselytizing on the part of Jews. The remarks of Horace and Tacitus, and the accounts of expulsion of Jews from Rome in Suetonius, Tacitus, Dio, and Valerius Maximus show that the Jewish community at Rome gained converts, but provide no real evidence that proselytes were aggressively sought. The figures of Ananias and Eleazar do reflect the eagerness of certain Jews to instruct gentiles, but they are not missionaries in the sense familiar to us from Paul’s letters and other early Christian sources. The saying of Jesus in Matthew 23:15 is probably best interpreted in light of the “correcting” activity of such figures as Eleazar.

The common assumption that gentile conversions must imply Jewish missionary activity does not reckon sufficiently with the great attraction Judaism apparently had for gentiles.¹¹⁶ Jews in antiquity did not, so far as our evidence indicates, engage in planned or public missionary preaching to gentiles. The only Jewish missionaries we know

¹¹⁵ An interpretation of Mt 23:15 in such terms is suggested by Axenfeld, “Propaganda” 37-46; McKnight, *Light* 106-108; Sevenster, *Roots* 208; Riesner, “Jewish Mission” 232-234; and Barnett, “Jewish Mission” 271-272.

¹¹⁶ On the attraction of Judaism, cf. Sevenster, *Roots* 216-18; Kasting, *Anfänge* 14-15; and Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 177-287, 334-37.

of in antiquity are the Jewish Christians we meet in Paul's letters, the book of Acts, and other early Christian documents. Missionary preaching is apparently, as William Braude surmised, a Christian invention.¹¹⁷ Several texts do provide striking evidence of an intense eagerness on the part of some Jews to embrace and instruct gentile converts. Some Jews may indeed have actively sought adherents among their gentile neighbors and acquaintances, but the sparseness of the evidence which may be construed in this way suggests that such activity was exceptional rather than typical. Judaism in the second temple period was generally not a missionary religion in this sense.

It would seem reasonable to conclude that the impetus to missionary activity in primitive Christianity cannot therefore be explained as having its origins in a prior Jewish mission to gentiles in the second temple period. As A.T. Kraabel observes, "without a Jewish mission it will be necessary to find another explanation for the early, energetic and pervasive mission of the new religion."¹¹⁸ And yet if the impulse to mission in earliest Christianity did not have its origins in Jewish missionary activity, where did it come from?¹¹⁹ Perhaps a clue is provided in the eagerness to embrace and instruct new converts reflected in several of the texts examined in this chapter. This Jewish interest in conversion, which has no parallel in the hellenistic world, is strikingly similar to the eager interest in conversion in evidence in many primitive Christian sources. Perhaps a further clue is provided in the fact that Paul in his pastoral care of new converts draws upon prior Jewish traditions regarding conversion of proselytes.¹²⁰ These observations suggest that the missionary consciousness of the primitive church, although not originating in a prior Jewish mission, may nonetheless have had its roots in Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion. These conceptions and their origins will be explored in the following chapter.

¹¹⁷ *Proselytizing* 8; cf. Bowers, "Religious Propaganda" 321-322; Goodman, *Mission* 90.

¹¹⁸ "Immigrants" 85.

¹¹⁹ The problematic character of theories locating the origin of the missionary consciousness of earliest Christianity in hellenistic religion or philosophy are briefly discussed in the Introduction (pp. 10-17).

¹²⁰ See Borgen, "Proselytes" 69-71; Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 110, 223.

CHAPTER TWO

CONVERSION OF GENTILES IN ISAIAH AND ELSEWHERE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

2.1 *Introduction*

From the lack of evidence for missionary activity by Jews in the second temple period one might assume that Jews during this period had little or no interest in conversion of gentiles.¹ Yet while none of the texts we have examined indicate that Jews in general aggressively sought proselytes, several of them do imply that converts were eagerly received.² If, then, there was an interest in conversion and an eagerness to instruct gentiles among at least some Jews of the period, why is there little or no evidence for active outreach or missionary preaching to gentiles? And if there was no Jewish mission, what then is the source of what A.T. Kraabel calls “the early, energetic and pervasive mission” of primitive Christianity? To answer these questions we must now look beyond notices of conversions in ancient, mostly non-Jewish, authors, to Jewish sources, and to the attitudes which they reveal regarding the relationship of the God of Israel to the gentile world. For Jews in the second temple period, the foundation for their understanding of the nations and conversion was the Hebrew Scriptures, and above all, as we will see, the book of Isaiah. While scholars have generally posited a widespread interest in gentiles and their conversion in many parts of the Old Testament, this view has been challenged. Robert Goldenberg, for example, has recently argued that “the Hebrew Scriptures reflect a fundamental lack of religious interest in the other nations.”³ Do the Hebrew Scriptures reveal an interest in gentiles and their con-

¹ Such an inference is in fact often drawn, e.g. Martin Goodman, “Proselytizing in Rabbinic Judaism,” *JJS* 40 (1989) 176; Murphy-O’Connor, “Jewish Mission” 39; Kraabel, “Immigrants” 78.

² E.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 20.34-48; *Ap.* 2.261: τοὺς μετέχειν τῶν ἡμετέρων βουλομένους ἡδέως δεχόμεθα ; Mt 23:15.

³ *Nations* 106.

version, or a fundamental absence of interest? In this chapter we will examine the understanding of gentiles and conversion in the book of Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament. In the ensuing chapter, we will see how the book of Isaiah played a formative role in Jewish understandings of the role of Israel in regard to the nations, and how diverse interpretations of the book of Isaiah in the second temple period underlie diverse attitudes toward gentiles and their conversion. In Part Two, we will see how these Jewish understandings underlie the pervasive missionary consciousness of the earliest Christians, and illumine Paul's understanding of the mission of the church in the letter to the Philippians.

With regard to method, primacy will be given in this chapter to a synchronic analysis of the book of Isaiah in its final form. After all, this is the form in which interpreters within the second temple period, with whom we will be concerned in chapter three, encountered the theological thought world of the text. At the same time, the passages from Isaiah taken up in this chapter will also be explored from diachronic perspectives, and a variety of exegetical methods will be used to illumine the text. The major exegetical conclusions to be drawn in this chapter are not dependent on a single interpretive method.⁴

⁴ The many-sided question of methodology regarding Isaiah (and the Hebrew Bible generally), especially the relationship between synchronic and diachronic analysis of the text, continues to be a storm-center of current debate, with no sign of a consensus in sight. For a small sampling of perspectives within the debate, see Ronald E. Clements, "Who is Blind But My Servant?" (Isaiah 42:19): How Then Shall We Read Isaiah?" *God in the Fray* (FS Walter Brueggemann; eds. Tod Linafelt and Timothy K. Beal; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998) 143-156; Christopher R. Seitz, "Isaiah and the Search for a New Paradigm," *The Papers of the Henry Luce Fellows in Theology*, vol. 3 (ed. Matthew Zyniewicz; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 97-114; Richard J. Coggins, "Do We Still Need Deutero-Isaiah?" *JSOT* 80 (1998) 77-92; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville: Westminster, 2001) 1-5; Gerald T. Sheppard, "Two Turbulent Decades of Research in Isaiah," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 9 (1993) 107-110; Anthony J. Tomasino, "Isaiah 1.1-2.4 and 63-66, and the Composition of the Isaianic Corpus," *JSOT* 57 (1993) 81-98; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109 (1990) 229-247; idem, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36-39* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); Edgar W. Conrad, *Reading Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); Benjamin D. Sommer, "The Scroll of Isaiah as Jewish Scripture, Or, Why Jews Don't Read Books," *SBL Seminar Papers 1996* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 225-242; Knut Holter, "Zur Funktion der Städte Judas in Jesaja XL 9," *VT* 46 (1996) 119-121; Rolf Rendtorff, "The Book of Isaiah: A Complex Unity. Synchronic and Diachronic Reading," *SBL Seminar Papers 1991* (ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991) 8-19; John N. Oswalt,

2.2 *The Nations in Isaiah and Elsewhere in the Old Testament*

The importance of the book of Isaiah for early Christians, an importance attested by the great frequency of its citation in the New Testament, was due no doubt in part to the attention which that book devotes to the place of the nations in God's salvation. The relationship of the God of Israel to the nations is in Isaiah, to a greater degree than in any other book of the Old Testament, a prominent and consistent theme.⁵ This theme is powerfully introduced by *Isaiah* 2:2-5, which, within the final redactional shaping of Isaiah, functions as the book's opening oracle.⁶ The oracle envisions a future pilgrimage of the nations to Zion:

And it shall be in time to come
the mountain of the house of Yahweh will be established
as head of the mountains,⁷ and it will be exalted above the hills.
And all the nations will stream to it,
and many peoples will come and say,
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
and he will teach us his ways,
and we will walk in his paths."
For from Zion will go forth teaching,
and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.

"The Kerygmatic Structure of the Book of Isaiah," *Go to the Land I Will Show You* (FS Dwight W. Young; eds. Joseph E. Coleson and Victor H. Matthews; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996) 143-157.

⁵ The importance of the nations throughout the book of Isaiah, a feature of the work often neglected in modern scholarship, is demonstrated by G.I. Davies, "The Destiny of the Nations in the Book of Isaiah," *The Book of Isaiah* (BETL 81; ed. Jacques Vermeylen; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989) 93-120; cf. Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39* (Louisville: John Knox, 1993) 39-40, 125-26; H.F. van Rooy, "The Nations in Isaiah: A Synchronic Survey," *Studies in Isaiah* (ed. W.C. van Wyk; Pretoria: NHW Press, 1980) 213-29; and Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger, *The God of Israel and the Nations: Studies in Isaiah and the Psalms* (Collegeville, MN: Glazier, 2000) 42-57.

⁶ The place of Isa 2:2-5 within the book's compositional history remains disputed, although the specifically redactional function of 2:5 in relation to 2:2-4 is widely acknowledged. For discussion, see Childs, *Isaiah* 28-29. In any case, within its present literary context Isa 2:2-5 has a strategic function as the book's opening oracle; see Seitz, *Isaiah* 39-40; Davies, "Nations" 93-94; cf. Tomasino, "Composition" 92-93. For a somewhat different analysis which nevertheless recognizes the key role of the passage within the final composition of the book, see W.A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* (Freiburg: Herder, 2003) 88-89.

⁷ Or "higher than the top of the mountains" according to the restoration proposed by J.S. Kselman, "A Note on Isaiah II,2," *VT* 25 (1975) 225-27.

And he will bring about justice between the nations,
 and render judgement for many peoples.
 And they will hammer their swords into plowknives,
 and their spears into pruning hooks;
 nation will not lift up sword against nation,
 and they will no longer learn war.
 O house of Jacob, come,
 and let us walk in the light of Yahweh!

In Isaiah's vision, the gentiles come in future days to the temple of Yahweh to be taught his word and to walk in his ways. The passage anticipates a future conversion of the nations.⁸ Such an expectation is not confined to this passage, but is expressed with a startling frequency elsewhere in Isaiah, in other prophetic books, and in the Psalms.⁹ Isaiah 2:2-5 exemplifies the nature of this expectation. In this passage, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, the conversion of the gentiles is not contemplated as a present possibility, but is awaited as an event "in time to come," when the promises of God to Israel come to fulfillment (2:2a; cf. esp. 25:6-9; 66:18-24; Mic 4:1-4; Zeph 3:9-10; Zech 2:11).¹⁰ There is also no indication, in this passage or

⁸ This is almost universally recognized; cf. Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 27-28; Wolfgang Werner, *Eschatologische Texte in Jesaja 1-39* (Würzburg: Echter, 1982) 158, 162; Seitz, *Isaiah* 38-39; James Limburgh, "Swords to Plowshares: Texts and Contexts," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 1.280-283; John T. Willis, "Isaiah 2:2-5 and the Psalms of Zion," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 1.296-307; Marvin A. Sweeney, "Micah's Debate with Isaiah," *JOT* 93 (2001) 111-124; Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* 90-94; Childs, *Isaiah* 30-31; Bosch, *Heidenmission* 23-24. The contrary interpretations of Hans Wildberger (*Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991] 91-92) and Baruch J. Schwartz ("Torah from Zion: Isaiah's Temple Vision (Isaiah 2:1-4)," *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity* [eds. A. Hartman, M.J.H.M. Poorthuis, J. Schwartz; Leiden: Brill, 1998] 11-26) are unconvincing. In describing Mount Zion as elevated above all other mountains and hills, Isaiah's mythopoetic imagery draws upon the ancient understanding of the mountains as the homes of the gods, in order powerfully to depict the exaltation of the God of Jacob over the idols of the nations (cf. Bertil Wiklander, *Prophecy as Literature: A Text Linguistic and Rhetorical Approach to Isaiah 2-4* [ConBOT 22; Stockholm: Liber Tryck, 1984] 116; John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986] 117).

⁹ Cf., in addition to the passages to be discussed more fully below, Isa 14:1-2; 19:18-25; 25:6-9; 37:20; 60:1-16; 66:18-24; Jer 3:17; 16:19-21; Mic 4:1-5; Zeph 2:11; 3:9-10; Hag 2:7; Zech 2:11; 8:18-23; 9:7; 9:9-10; 14:9; 14:16-19; Joel 2:28; Hab 2:14; Psalms 22:27; 66:4; 86:9; 102:15-16, 21-22; 138:4-5.

¹⁰ On the future character of Isaiah 2:2-4, cf. Gerhard von Rad, "Die Stadt auf dem Berg," *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Kaiser, 1958) 215-

elsewhere, that this is to come about through any action of Israel. Rather, the nations will stream to the house of the Lord as a result of God's glorification of Zion (2:2-3; cf. esp. 11:9-10; 60:1-16; Jer 3:17; 16:19-21; Zech 8:18-23; 14:9; 14:16-19; Ps 86:9; 102:21-22). The process whereby the gentiles become attached to the God of Israel is not depicted as *centrifugal* (in which Israel goes out to the nations) but *centripetal* (in which the nations come to Zion).¹¹ Israel has no part in the conversion of the nations; it is God who will turn the nations to himself and bring them to Mount Zion (2:2; cf. esp. Hag 2:7; Zech 9:7; Zeph 2:11; Ps 22:27).¹²

This vision of gentiles flocking to Zion, often referred to as the "eschatological pilgrimage tradition," is a characteristic feature of the picture of Israel's future hopes drawn in the Old Testament, and reveals a living and intense expectation of a future conversion of the nations.¹³ Its importance within the book of Isaiah is signalled by the strategic place of 2:2-5 within the book's structure. Isaiah 2:2-5 is a programmatic oracle within the final redactional shaping of the book of Isaiah. The passage not only introduces the theme of the

17; Werner, *Eschatologische Texte* 158; Hans Wildberger, "Die Völkerwallfahrt zum Zion," *VT* 7 (1957) 76-78; Childs, *Isaiah* 29; Seitz, *Isaiah* 38, 43-44. The passage was universally interpreted in later Judaism as a promise for the future; cf. Robert L. Wilken, "In novissimis diebus: Biblical Promises, Jewish Hopes and Early Christian Exegesis," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993) 13-15. On the conversion of the nations as a future expectation in the Old Testament generally, see Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 37-41.

¹¹ Cf. Sverre Aalen, *Die Begriffe 'Licht' und 'Finsternis' im Alten Testament, im Spätjudentum und in Rabbinismus* (Oslo: Dybwad, 1951) 86-89; Robert Martin-Achard, *A Light to the Nations* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962) 61; idem, "Israel, peuple sacerdotal," *Verbum Caro* 18 (1964) 24; H.H. Rowley, *The Missionary Message of the Old Testament* (London: Carey, 1944) 31-32; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 27-35; Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 56-60; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 34, 40; Graeme L. Goldsworthy, "The Great Indicative: An Aspect of a Biblical Theology of Mission," *Reformed Theological Review* 55 (1996) 6-9.

¹² Aalen, *Licht* 87; Martin-Achard, *Light* 69, 75-76; Childs, *Isaiah* 30; H.H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought* (London: SCM, 1956) 187; Gerhard Lohfink, "'Schwerter und Pflugscharen': Die Rezeption von Jes 2,1-5 par M 4,1-5 in der alten Kirche und im Neuen Testament," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 166 (1986) 187; Hahn, *Mission* 19-20; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 37-38.

¹³ The word "eschatological," which is used in a confusing variety of senses in the literature, will be used in this study in the minimalist sense of an expectation of Yahweh's future activity whereby his ultimate purposes for Israel and the nations are realized; for further discussion, see H. Leene, "History and Eschatology in Deutero-Isaiah," *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (FS W.A.M. Beuken; eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 223-249.

conversion of the gentiles, but also introduces motifs and imagery which serve a key role in the development of this theme throughout the book. The redactional expansion of 2:2-4 in 2:5 introduces the crucial theme of light within the book of Isaiah.¹⁴ A series of literary echoes link the exhortation in 2:5 to walk in the light of Yahweh with the words of the nations in 2:3 ('Jacob'/'house'/'come'/'walk in'/'Yahweh').¹⁵ 2:5 thus functions as an exhortation to the house of Jacob to imitate the nations in their conversion from idols to the true God.¹⁶ This also has the literary effect of associating the imagery of light in 2:5 with the revelation of God to the nations in 2:2-4.¹⁷ This is an important literary clue which foreshadows the development of this theme throughout the book.

The theme of gentile conversion is taken up and developed in the book of Isaiah's second royal oracle in *Isaiah 11:1-9(10)*.¹⁸ Like

¹⁴ The imagery of light in Isaiah is one of a select group of controlling images which are "key features in the book's structure" and "central to . . . the book's message," according to Ronald E. Clements, "A Light to the Nations: A Central Theme of the Book of Isaiah," *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve* (FS John D.W. Watts; JSOTSS 235; eds. James W. Watts and Paul R. House; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 62. Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* 89, 94.

¹⁵ Wiklander notes: "2:5 is linked to 2:1-4 by the devices of 1) *recurrence* ('Yahweh/Jacob/walk in'), 2) *partial recurrence* ('house of the God of Jacob' contracted into 'house of Jacob'-cf 2:3d and 2:5), 3) *parallelism* ('come, let us go up to'/'come, let us walk in'-cf. 2:3c, 2:5), [and] 4) *paraphrase* ('Jacob' in 2:3d/'house of Jacob' in 2:5; 'ways/paths' and 'law/word' are contracted into 'light' in 2:5)" (*Prophecy* 101). Cf. Seitz, *Isaiah* 38-39; Oswalt, *Isaiah* 118-119; Sweeney, "Debate" 115. Wiklander calls 2:5 a "condensation" of 2:3 (183) and adds that "2:5 was shaped as . . . a paraphrase of 2:3c-f with capacity to associate with the content of 2:2b-4 as a whole" (218).

¹⁶ Sweeney, *Isaiah* 90; Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* 94.

¹⁷ This association is further strengthened through the assonance of "light" (אור) in 2:5 and key terms concerning the word of the Lord to the nations in 2:3 (ארח "path"; תורה "teaching"; ירנו "he will teach"). Cf. Wiklander, *Prophecy* 183. The association of the conversion of the nations with light may also be introduced indirectly in 2:2 through wordplay upon the two distinct meanings of the homonymous roots נהר (1) "stream" and נהר (2) "shine, be radiant," in order to express not only the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion, but also their participation in the light of divine revelation (2:3, 5). Cf. J.J.M. Roberts, "Double Entendre in First Isaiah," *CBQ* 54 (1992) 48; Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* 88.

¹⁸ The precise relationship of 11:1-5 and 11:6-9 within the oracle's compositional history is disputed, although it is widely agreed that 11:10 is a redactional addition to 11:1-9. On the oracle see Yehoshua Gitay, *Isaiah and his Audience: The Structure and Meaning of Isaiah 1-12* (Assen:Van Gorcum, 1991) 212-223; Ernst Haag, "Der neue David und die Offenbarung der Lebensfülle Gottes nach Jesaja 11,1-9," *Im Gespräch mit dem dreieinen Gott: Elemente einer trinitarischen Theologie* (FS Wilhelm Breuninger; eds. Michael Böhnke and Hanspeter Heinz; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1985) 97-114;

2:2-5, 11:9, together with its crucial redactional expansion in 11:10, accents the inclusion of the nations in Israel's future hopes:

They will do no evil or injury
in all my holy mountain,
for the earth shall be filled
with the knowledge of Yahweh
as the waters covering the sea.
And in that day
the root of Jesse who will stand
shall become a rallying standard for the peoples;
the nations will seek him,
and his resting place will be glory.

Several echoes of 2:2-5 in 11:9-10 link these two passages, associating the gathering of the nations to the root of Jesse in 11:9-10 with the pilgrimage of the nations in 2:2-5.¹⁹ The depiction of the nations "seeking" the root of Jesse envisions that they will come for divine instruction, and thus corresponds to the pilgrimage of the gentiles to learn the ways of Yahweh in 2:2-3.²⁰ These associations require that, within the final redaction of Isaiah 2-12, 11:9-10 be read as envisioning, not merely submission to the Davidic ruler, but

Marvin A. Sweeney, "Jesse's New Shoot in Isaiah 11: A Josianic Reading of the Prophet Isaiah," *A Gift of God in Due Season* (FS James A. Sanders; eds. Richard D. Weis and David M. Carr; JSOTSup 225; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 103-118; Andrew H. Bartelt, *The Book Around Immanuel: Style and Structure in Isaiah 2-12* (Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego 4; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996) 162-175; Dan P. Cole, "Archaeology and the Messiah Oracles of Isaiah 9 and 11," *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King* (eds. Michael D. Coogan, J. Cheryl Exum and Lawrence E. Stager; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994) 53-69; J.J.M. Roberts, "The Translation of Isa 11:10," *Near Eastern Studies* (eds. Masao Mori, Hideo Ogawa and Mamoru Yoshikawa; Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1991) 363-370; E. Zenger, "Die Verheissung Jesaja 11,1-10: universal oder partikular?" *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (FS W.A.M. Beuken; eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 137-147; Ernst Joachim Waschke, "Die Stellung der Königstexte im Jesajabuch im Vergleich zu den Königspsalmen 2, 72 und 89," *ZAW* 110 (1998) 355-359.

¹⁹ Cf. "mountain" (11:9, 2:2-3); "in that day"/"in days to come" (11:10, 2:2); "peoples" (11:10, 2:3-4); "nations" (11:10, 2:2, 4); "seek"/"come, let us go up" (11:10, 2:3); universal peace (11:9, 2:4). See Childs, *Isaiah* 104-105; Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12* 316, 325.

²⁰ The word שׁוּר in Isaiah is normally used of seeking divine instruction, whether from Yahweh or idols (8:19; 9:12[13]; 19:3; 31:1; 34:16; 35:6; 58:2; 65:1; 65:10). When used, as in Isa 11:10, in conjunction with אֶל, this is the only sense of the term attested (see Dt 18:11; Jb 5:8; Isa 8:19; 19:3).

conversion to the God of Jacob.²¹ Moreover, a striking number of thematic and lexical connections link 11:9-10 with the opening of the first royal oracle in 8:23b-9:1 (=Eng 9:1b-9:2).²² These intertextual connections link the dawning of the light upon the mixed gentile populace of northern Israel ("Galilee of the nations") in 8:23b-9:1, which picks up the imagery of light associated with the pilgrimage of the nations in 2:5, with the conversion of the gentiles envisioned in 11:9-10. This has the literary effect of again associating the imagery of light with the conversion of the nations.²³ The

²¹ Cf. Seitz, *Isaiah* 74-75; Gitay, *Structure* 223; Childs, *Isaiah* 104-106; Beuken, *Jesaja* 1-12 325.

²² Cf. "earth"/"land" (אֶרֶץ 11:9, 8:23 [9:1]); "sea" (11:9, 8:23 [9:1]); "in that day"/"in days to come" (11:10, 8:23 [9:1]); "people" (11:10, 9:1 [9:2]); "nations" (11:10, 8:23 [9:1]); "glory"/"glorify" (11:10, 8:23 [9:1]). Most scholars regard 8:23b, like 2:5 and 11:10, as a literary bridge reflecting editorial shaping of the oracle. Space precludes treatment of the first royal oracle (8:23b-9:6 [=Eng 9:1b-7]) in this study. For discussion, see Gitay, *Structure* 160-173; Antti Laato, "Immanuel—Who is with Us?—Hezekiah or Messiah?" *Wünschet Jerusalem Frieden?: Collected Communications to the XIIIth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Jerusalem 1986* (ed. Matthias Augustin and Klaus-Dietrich Schunck; Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris: Peter Lang, 1988) 313-322; Marvin A. Sweeney, "A Philological and Form-Critical Reevaluation of Isaiah 8:16-9:6," *Hebrew Annual Review* (ed. Theodore J. Lewis; Columbus, OH: Melton Center for Jewish Studies, 1994) 215-231; Michael E.W. Thompson, "Isaiah's Ideal King," *JSTOT* 24 (1982) 79-88; Dieter Vieweger, "Das Volk, das durch das Dunkel zieht . . .": Neue Überlegungen zu Jes (8,23abb) 9,1-6," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 36 (1992) 77-86; A.S. van der Woude, "Jesaja 8,19-23a als literarische Einheit," *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (FS W.A.M. Beuken; eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 129-136; Conrad E. L'Heureux, "The Redactional History of Isaiah 5.1-10.4," *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G.W. Ahlström* (eds. W. Boyd Barick and John R. Spencer; JSTOT Supp 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1984) 99-119; Bartelt, *Immanuel* 119-124; Cole, "Messiah Oracles" 53-69; Paul D. Wegner, "A Re-examination of Isaiah IX 1-6" *VT* 42 (1992) 103-112; R.A. Carlson, "The Anti-Assyrian Character of the Oracle in Is. IX 1-6," *VT* 24 (1974) 130-135; K.D. Schunck, "Der fünfte Thronname des Messias (Jes. IX 5-6)," *VT* 23 (1973) 108-110; Hans-Peter Müller, "Uns ist ein Kind geboren": Jes 9,1-6 in traditionsgeschichtlicher Sicht," *Evangelische Theologie* 9 (1961) 408-419; J.P.J. Olivier, "The Day of Midian and Isaiah 9:3b," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 9 (1981) 143-149; H.A.J. Kruger, "Infant Negotiator? God's Ironical Strategy for Peace: A perspective on Child-figures in Isaiah 7-11, with special reference to the Royal Figure in Isaiah 9:5-6," *Scriptura* 44 (1993) 66-88; John Goldingay, "The Compound Name in Isaiah 9:5(6)," *CBQ* 61 (1999) 239-244; Henning Graf Reventlow, "A Syncretistic Enthronement-Hymn in Is. 9,1-6," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 3 (1971) 321-325.

²³ See the discussion of 2:2-5 above. The role of the apparent redactional expansions in 2:5, 8:23b and 11:10 in the development of this theme within chapters 2-12 is noteworthy.

pilgrimage of the nations to the light of Yahweh thus emerges as an important theme in Isaiah 2-12.

The conversion of the nations is throughout the book of Isaiah an expectation of the future.²⁴ However, in one passage within the book of Isaiah interest in the pre-eschatological conversion of gentiles is vividly expressed. In *Isaiah 56:1-8* non-Israelites who love the Lord and serve him are promised joy in God's house and acceptance at his altar (56:3, 6-7).²⁵ Interest in these converts is expressed quite strikingly in the description of the temple's ultimate purpose as a "house of prayer for all the peoples" (56:7b).²⁶ It is also evident in the implication in 56:6-7 of a participation by these gentiles in the priestly service of Yahweh exercised by the Levitical priesthood within the nation of Israel (cf. Isa 60:7; 66:21).²⁷ At the same time, the passage utilizes language and imagery drawn from the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, in order to place these promises to

²⁴ Other key passages in the book of Isaiah reflecting an expectation of a future conversion of the gentiles, which space precludes discussing here, include 14:1-2; 19:18-25; 25:6-9; 60:1-16; and 66:18-24.

²⁵ It is widely agreed that 56:1-8, which many interpreters regard as belonging to the final editorial shaping of Third Isaiah, formed an original unit (although 56:8 may have been an independent oracle added to 56:1-7 at a very early stage). On the unity of 56:1-8, see D.W. van Winkle, "Isaiah LVI 1-8," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 1997* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 234-235.

²⁶ See further on the universalistic elements within the passage W.A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja* (POuT; 4 vols. [IIA-IIIB]; Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1979-1989) IIIA, 30-39; Klaus Koenen, *Ethik und Eschatologie im Tritojesajabuch* (WMANT 62; Neukirchen/Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990) 27-32; Gregory J. Polan, *In the Ways of Justice Toward Salvation* (New York/Berne/Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1986) 67-73; Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56-66* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982) 35-37; George A.F. Knight, *The New Israel: A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah 56-66* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 5-9; cf. G.I. Emmerson, *Isaiah 56-66* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992) 106-107; van Winkle, "Isaiah LVI 1-8" 239-244; Childs, *Isaiah* 458-459.

²⁷ The promise that foreigners will "be his servants" (לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ עֲבָדִים) and "minister to him" (לְשָׁרְתוֹ) strongly implies such a priestly function, which most likely underlies the reference to the sacrifices offered by these gentiles in 56:7; see Roy D. Wells, "'Isaiah' as an Exponent of Torah: Isaiah 56.1-8," *New Visions of Isaiah* (eds. Roy F. Melugin and Marvin A. Sweeney; JSOT Supp 214; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 147-148, who speaks of an "implied priesthood of aliens" in Isa 56:6-7. Cf. Childs, *Isaiah* 542. Both IQIsa-a and LXX Isaiah reflect altered readings of Isa 56:6, apparently motivated by discomfort with the implication in MT Isa 56:6 that foreigners will share in the priestly service of Yahweh; see Dwight W. van Winkle, "An Inclusive Authoritative Text in Exclusive Communities," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 1.423-440.

present-day converts within the perspective of a coming ingathering of the nations to Zion.²⁸

Two important features of this passage should be observed. First, the interest in present day converts which the passage reveals nevertheless does not involve a mission on the part of Israel actively to seek gentile converts. The initiative in their conversion does not lie with Israel, but with the converts themselves, as evident in the way they are described: *בְּנֵי הַנֶּכֶר הַנִּלְוִים עַל יְהוָה* “foreigners who attach themselves to Yahweh” (56:6). Second, expectations of a future ingathering of the nations and interest in present-day converts, rather than excluding one another, appear in this passage to be closely related. In Isaiah 56:1-8, foreigners who join themselves to the Lord are understood as proleptic signs of Yahweh’s ultimate purpose of gathering the nations to himself (56:7a, 8) and making his temple a “house of prayer for all the peoples” (56:7b).

These conceptions concerning present day converts are in evidence elsewhere in the Old Testament. Interest in gentile converts is evident in the book of *Ruth*. It is commonly supposed that this book describes, not the conversion of Ruth, but merely her migration and assimilation into the nation of Israel.²⁹ But a closer reading reveals that the migration of Ruth is in the work interpreted theologically

²⁸ 56:7 recalls 11:9-10 (“my holy mountain” [הַר קְדִישִׁי] 11:9, 56:7; “peoples” [עַמִּים] 11:10, 56:7), as well as the vision of the nations gathering to the mountain of Zion in 2:2-5. Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIIA, 31-32; Marvin A. Sweeney, “The Reconceptualization of the Davidic Covenant in Isaiah,” *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 52; Wells, “Torah” 151; and Lohfink, *God of Israel* 54. As Childs observes, the context of 56:7 is thus “explicitly eschatological” (*Isaiah* 458). Similarly, Isa 56:8 reads: “The sovereign Lord declares, who gathers (מְקַבֵּץ) the outcasts of Israel (נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל): ‘I will yet gather (אֶקַּבֵּץ) [others i.e. apparently gentiles] to them, in addition to those [already] gathered [i.e. Israelites].’” This verse, which envisions a future ingathering of the nations, is most likely linked through literary recurrence to Isa 11:12 (“he will gather the outcasts of Israel (נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), and gather (יִקַּבֵּץ) the dispersed of Judah”). Cf. Sweeney, “Reconceptualization” 52; Wells, “Torah” 151. Isa 56:8 thus portrays the new Exodus of 11:11-12 as receiving its crowning fulfillment in the ingathering of Israel and the gentiles together to Mount Zion.

²⁹ So Cohen, “Conversion” 38; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 289; Martin-Achard, *Light* 3; Edward F. Campbell, *Ruth* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975) 80-82; A.M. Hunter, “How Many Gods Had Ruth?” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34 (1981) 427-36; Bonnie Honig, “Ruth, the Model Emigrée: Mourning and the Symbolic Politics of Immigration,” *Ruth and Esther: A Feminist Companion to the Bible* (ed. A. Brenner; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 57-64; Tod Linafelt, *Ruth* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999) 36-37; Goldenberg, *Nations* 16.

as her entry into the covenant of God with Israel.³⁰ Ruth is extolled as a gentile who has turned from her gods and her people to the God of Israel (1:16-17; 2:11-12), and the detailed account of her integration into Israel (2:2; 2:8-13; 2:14-16; 3:1-2; 3:9; 3:11; 4:10-13; 4:15; 4:17) carefully develops the theme of her full inclusion in the covenant people.³¹ The implication is that all gentiles who, like Ruth, seek refuge under the wings of the God of Israel are accepted and richly rewarded by him, and must be warmly welcomed by the people of Israel.³² Nevertheless, there is in the book of Ruth, as in Isaiah 56:1-8, no indication that the people of Israel are actively to seek out such gentile converts.

In *1 Kings 8:41-43* Solomon prays that God fulfill the petitions of the foreigner who visits Israel in order to pray before the temple. The foreigners envisioned here are not necessarily converts, but include all gentiles who, hearing of the power of Israel's God, come to call upon him for aid.³³ The outstanding example of such a foreigner in Kings is Naaman the Syrian, who comes to Israel not as a convert but in order to be cured of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:1-14). Naaman, however, responds to the miracle of his cleansing with a monotheistic confession of exclusive devotion to Yahweh: "Now I

³⁰ In the literary structure of Ruth's speech in 1:16-17 the central and thematic element is her avowal "your people will be my people, and your God will be my God" (1:16); cf. W.S. Prinsloo, "The Theology of the Book of Ruth," *VT* 30 (1980) 333-34. The affirmation is expressed in terms strongly evocative of the covenant (cf. Gen 17:7; Lev 11:45; 26:12; 26:45). Moreover, Ruth's use in her oath of the covenantal name Yahweh (1:17) implies renunciation of her ancestral gods (Robert L. Hubbard, *The Book of Ruth* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988] 117-18, 120); compare Jer 12:16 on the covenantal implications of swearing by Yahweh's name. Boaz's description of Yahweh as "the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge" (2:12) also implies Ruth's covenantal relationship to Yahweh (cf. Ps 36:7-10; 91:1-10). Cf. Rowley, *Faith of Israel* 186; Robert L. Hubbard, "Ganzheitsdenken in the Book of Ruth," *Problems in Biblical Theology* (eds. H.T.C. Sun and K.L. Eades; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 200-201; John Briggs Curtis, "Second Thoughts on the Book of Ruth," *Proceedings EGL & MWBS* 16 (1996) 146.

³¹ Cf. Hubbard, *Ruth* 156, 162-63, 173-74, 189-90; Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Between Ezra and Isaiah: Exclusion, Transformation, and Inclusion of the 'Foreigner' in Post-Exilic Biblical Theology," *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. Mark G. Brett; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 137.

³² Cf. Hubbard, *Ruth* 41-42, 64-65, 67-68, 217, 230, 256; Axenfeld, *Propaganda* 21; Peter Theodore Nash, "Ruth: An Exercise in Israelite Political Correctness or a Call to Proper Conversion?" *The Pitcher Is Broken* (JSOTS 190; eds. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 347-354.

³³ Martin Rehm, *Das erste Buch der Könige: Ein Kommentar* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1979) 97.

know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel!" (2 *Kings* 5:15-19).³⁴ The story of Naaman shows that, for the author of *Kings*, the ultimate purpose of God's miraculous acts in behalf of gentiles is their conversion.³⁵ Similarly in 1 *Kings* 8:41-43, the purpose of God's fulfillment of the foreigner's petition is "that all the peoples of the earth may know your name, to fear you, as do your people Israel" (8:43).³⁶ Solomon's prayer thus links God's activity in behalf of individual gentiles to a future hope for the spread of the knowledge of God among all nations. This expectation is echoed in Solomon's concluding benediction, where he prays "that all the peoples of the earth may know that Yahweh is God; there is no other" (1 *Kings* 8:60). Strikingly, in this passage Solomon prays that the central confession of Israel's faith (cf. Deut 4:35; 4:39; 1 *Kings* 18:37; 18:39) become the faith of all the peoples of the earth (cf. 2 *Kings* 5:15; 19:19).³⁷

A similarly universalistic thrust pervades the Psalms. Many psalms envision a universal reign of God (e.g. 22:27-28; 46:8-10; 66:1-4; 96:10-13; 97:1, 9; 98:1-9) or of his anointed king (e.g. 2:8-12; 72:8-11; 110:1-2; cf. Zech 9:9-10; Mic 5:4-5; Gen 49:10) to the ends of the earth. A number of psalms explicitly understand this universal kingdom to involve the worship of Yahweh as the true God by people

³⁴ Cf. the similar confession of the gentile Rahab in Js 2:11: "Yahweh your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth below." On the conversion of Naaman see Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (Atlanta: Knox, 1987) 176-83; Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1988) 67-68; Robert L. Cohn, "Form and Perspective in 2 Kings V," *VT* 33 (1983) 177-79, 184; Lal Ling Elizabeth Ngan, "2 Kings 5," *Review and Expositor* 94 (1997) 591-593; T.R. Hobbs, *2 Kings* (Waco: Word, 1985) 65-66, 68-69; Martin Rehm, *Das zweite Buch der Könige* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1982) 64-65; Gwilym H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984) 418-19; Bertholet, *Stellung* 92-93. The peculiar view of Cohen that Naaman was monolatrous but not monotheistic ("Conversion" 43 [n. 9]) is in flat contradiction to Naaman's confession (2 *Kings* 5:15). The startling claim of Goldenberg that Naaman following his cleansing continued his worship of other gods (*Nations* 17-18) is likewise irreconcilable with the text (cf. 2 *Kings* 5:17: "Your servant will no more make offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to Yahweh only").

³⁵ Cf. 2 *Kings* 5:8, 1 *Kings* 17:24; see Nelson, *Kings* 182.

³⁶ On this passage, cf. E. Talstra, *Solomon's Prayer: Synchrony and Diachrony in the Composition of I Kings 8,14-61* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993) 121-122; Marc Brettler, "Interpretation and Prayer: Notes on the Composition of 1 Kings 8:15-53," *Minhah le-Nahum* (JSOTSS 154; eds. M. Brettler and M. Fishbane; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 28-29.

³⁷ Nelson, *Kings* 55; Simon J. DeVries, *1 Kings* (Waco: Word, 1985) 126; cf. G. Braulik, "Spuren einer Neuarbeitung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes in 1 Kön 8,52-53.59-60," *Bib* 52 (1971) 27-29.

of all nations (e.g. 2:11-12; 22:27-28; 66:1-4; 96:1-10; 97:1; 98:4-6).³⁸ In *Psalms* 67 the purpose of God's blessing upon Israel is that all the nations may fear him and know his salvation.³⁹ The gentiles in response to this salvation are bidden to praise God (67:4-6 [Eng 67:3-5]), and the psalmist elsewhere repeatedly summons the nations to praise and worship the God of Israel (47:1; 66:1-8; 68:32; 96:1-2, 7-10; 97:1; 98:4-6; 100:1-2; 117:1; cf. 33:8).⁴⁰ As in these passages and elsewhere in the Psalms (22:27, 66:4, 86:9, 102:15-16, 21-22), the conversion of the nations envisioned in Psalm 67 is an eschatological expectation.⁴¹ However, that such an expectation did not exclude interest in gentile conversions in the present is shown by the deliberate inclusion of gentiles within the cultus of the worshipping community, as evident in several passages (115:9-13, 118:2-4, 135:19-20).⁴² The way in which present conversions were understood to be related to this future expectation is suggested by *Psalms* 47, where the presence of gentiles in the cultus is celebrated as a sign and earnest of the future ingathering of the nations.⁴³ As in Isaiah

³⁸ On the crucial role which the theme of the pilgrimage of the nations plays within the literary structure, composition and theology of the Psalter, see Lohfink and Zenger, *God of Israel*, esp. 57-84, 123-190. As Lohfink and Zenger demonstrate, a number of psalms not usually associated with the nations' worship of Yahweh should also be understood as developing this theme, including Psalms 22-25 (see pp. 57-84), Psalm 87 (see pp. 123-160), and Psalm 100 (see pp. 161-190), the latter being "the scenic and theological high point" of the section Psalms 93-100, and thus of Book IV of the Psalter as a whole (p. 178).

³⁹ Harald-Martin Wahl, "Psalm 67: Erwägungen zu Aufbau, Gattung und Datierung," *Bib* 73 (1992) 244, 246-47; Walter Beyerlin, *Im Licht der Traditionen: Psalm LXVII und CXV, Ein Entwicklungszusammenhang* (SVT 45; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 4-50; Beat Weber, "Psalm LXVII: Anmerkungen zum Text Selbst und zur Studie von W. Beyerlin," *VT* 43 (1993) 561-563; Hans Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986) 16; idem, *Psalmen* 462-63; Weiser, *Psalms* 475.

⁴⁰ The view that these passages are always merely formulaic, and call the gentiles to praise only in their capacity as creatures (cf. Allen, *Psalms* 116-118; Martin-Achard, *Light* 58-59), is untenable in view of such passages as 67:4-6 [Eng 67:3-5] and 96:7-10.

⁴¹ Wahl, "Psalm 67" 244, 246; Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (Waco: Word, 1990) 159; Lohfink and Zenger, *God of Israel* 62-64, 127-160, 161-165, 168-183; differently Beyerlin, *Traditionen* 33-34, 42-44, 49. For the minimalist sense in which the term "eschatological" is employed in this study, see p. 61, n. 13 above.

⁴² On these passages see pp. 37-38 above.

⁴³ Cf. Kraus, *Psalmen* 353; Weiser, *Psalms* 374-79; Jörg Jeremias, *Das Königtum Gottes in den Psalmen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1987) 65-68; Wolfgang Faske, "Das Ringen des Volkes um die Stellung der Völker," *SJOT* 11 (1997) 190. On the fusion of cult and eschatology in Psalm 47, see Bent Rosendal, "'Gott

56:1-8 and Kings, in Psalm 47 present day converts anticipate the spreading of the knowledge of God over the earth in the time of Yahweh's coming reign.

Yet as in the other texts we have examined, the interest which the Psalms display in the conversion of gentiles is not accompanied by any indication that converts are actively to be sought. In a number of passages the psalmist calls upon his hearers to declare God's wonderful deeds among the nations (9:11, 96:3, 105:1-3; cf. 18:49, 57:9, 108:3). These passages thus "raise the banner of universal proclamation and communication."⁴⁴ But they do not constitute a direct command to missionary preaching.⁴⁵

In the book of *Jonah*, by contrast, the prophet is commanded to preach to the Ninevites (1:1-2; 3:1-2). Moreover, the commission of Jonah occurs in the context of a work marked for its interest in gentiles and universalistic tenor (cf. esp. 4:2; 4:11; 1:14-16). In particular, the description of the sailors' response to Yahweh's acts in 1:14-16 hints at a concern for conversion of gentiles, and this in turn enhances the significance of Jonah's preaching activity in the work.⁴⁶ The expectation of a future ingathering of the nations,

ist Aufgestiegen': Zur Geschichte der Interpretation von Psalm 47," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* (1/1991) 148-54. In 47:10 (Eng 47:9) the nobles of the peoples assemble "as the people of the God of Abraham." The widely held view that the MT has been shortened by haplography, and that the original text read עַם עִם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם ("with the people of the God of Abraham") (so Kraus, *Psalmen* 348, *et al.*) has little plausibility; cf. LXX μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, which presumes a *Vorlage* with one עַם, and see Michael D. Goulder, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1982) 158-59; W.S. Prinsloo, "Psalm 47: Partikularisme en universalism. Jahwe is ons koning én koning oor die hele aarde," *Skrif en Kerk* 17 (1996) 396. The designation "the people of the God of Abraham" identifies the ingathering of the nations as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham of blessing for all peoples through him (Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Jer 4:2; Ps 72:17). On the portrayal in 47:9-10 (Eng 47:8-9) of the "nobles of the peoples" as converts to the worship of the one God, and the function of the Abraham traditions in this portrayal, see Jeremias, *Königtum Gottes* 67-68; Erich Zenger, "Der Gott Abrahams und die Völker: Beobachtungen zu Psalm 47," *Die Väter Israels: Beiträge zur Theologie der Patriarchenüberlieferungen im Alten Testament* (ed. M. Georg; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989) 413-30; Weiser, *Psalm* 378; and Jutta Hausmann, "Gott ist König über die Völker." Der Beitrag von Ps 47 zum Thema Israel und die Völker," *Vielseitigkeit des Alten Testaments* (eds. J.A. Loader and H.V. Kieweler; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999) 97-100.

⁴⁴ Kraus, *Theology* 16; cf. idem, *Psalmen* 667; Löhr, *Missionsgedanke* 31-33.

⁴⁵ Brief but perceptive discussion in Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 36-37.

⁴⁶ While there is in 1:14-16 no explicit conversion of the sailors to monotheistic faith in Yahweh (cf. Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah* [New York: Doubleday, 1990] 24, 140),

such as we have seen in Isaiah 2:2-5 and prominently elsewhere in the Old Testament, may thus underlie the author's interest in the prophetic ministry of Jonah to the Ninevites. Yet Jonah's preaching campaign itself is not precisely missionary; his proclamation results in the repentance of the Ninevites, not their conversion (3:5-10).⁴⁷ There is, in addition, no implication that individual Israelites are to follow in Jonah's footsteps by preaching to the nations.⁴⁸ The book of Jonah, as the other texts we have examined, provides clear evidence for an interest in gentiles and their conversion, but no evidence for a missionary commission of Israel to bring this about.

2.3 *Conversion of Gentiles in Isaiah 40-55*

Interest in the destiny of the nations, which we have seen appears frequently elsewhere in the Old Testament and is an important

the sailors' vows and offerings to Yahweh in 1:16 strongly suggests this, in light of the striking verbal recurrences between this verse and 1:9 and 2:9-10 (Eng 2:8-9) (cf. Isa 19:21). On the significance of the sailors' vows and offerings to Yahweh, cf. K. Dorn, "Israel und die Heidenvölker," *Christentum und nichtchristliche Religionen* (ed. Harald Wagner; Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1991) 101-104; Jonathan Magonet, *Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah* (Sheffield: Almond, 1983) 94-95; Wayne G. Strickland, "Isaiah, Jonah, and Religious Pluralism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (1996) 31-32; Kenneth M. Craig, *A Poetics of Jonah* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1993) 94. On the function of the interplay and progression of the names of God within the narrative of chapter 1 in portraying the sailors as coming to the knowledge of Yahweh, see Claude Lichtert, "Récit et noms de Dieu dans le livre de Jonas," *Biblica* 84 (2003) 249-50. The suggestion of the sailors' conversion was sufficiently broad to make Josephus uncomfortable and induce him to eliminate it from his retelling of the narrative (*Ant.* 9.209-13). On Josephus' anti-conversion tendencies, see above p. 50.

⁴⁷ The ostensible rationale of Jonah's commission is not a divine purpose for the conversion of the nations but the existence of a universal moral standard to which God holds all nations accountable; cf. Jer 18:7-10, and see Hans Walter Wolff, *Studien zum Jonabuch* (2nd ed.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1975) 16-18; R.W.L. Moberly, "Preaching for a Response? Jonah's Message to the Ninevites Reconsidered," *VT* 53 (2003) 158. The occasional characterization of Jonah as a missionary (e.g. Rowley, *Missionary Message* 67-69) is thus far overstated. Rightly Goldsworthy, "Indicative" 8; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 33-34, 41; Smith-Christopher, "Inclusion" 134-135. The distinction is blurred by Baruch A. Levine, "The Place of Jonah in the History of Biblical Ideas," *On the Way to Nineveh* (FS George M. Landes; eds. Stephen L. Cook and S.C. Winter; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 209-215.

⁴⁸ *Contra* Bertholet, *Stellung* 200-201, Michael E. Thompson, "The Mission of Jonah," *ExpTim* 105 (1994) 233-236, *et al.*; as Martin-Achard observes: "There is no question here . . . of a preaching mission devolving upon Israel" (*Light* 53).

theme throughout the book of Isaiah, is most prominent of all in chapters 40-55 of that book. Deutero-Isaiah envisions Yahweh's coming redemption of his people through the New Exodus, and the dawning of his eschatological reign over the nations. The fact that direct references to "the gentiles" occur over twenty times in these chapters illustrates the importance of the nations in Isaiah 40-55. Yet the precise nature of the destiny which Isaiah 40-55 envisions for the nations has been quite widely disputed. According to the traditional view, these chapters represent the supreme expression in the Old Testament of a universalistic concern for the salvation of the gentiles, and of a missionary consciousness of the nation of Israel.⁴⁹ Other interpreters have argued that Isaiah 40-55 envisions

⁴⁹ Cf. Löhr, *Missionsgedanke* 19-21; P. Volz, *Jesaja II* (Leipzig: Scholl, 1932) 168-69; Rowley, *Missionary Message* 51, 55-64; Claus Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969) 100-101; John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968) lvii, lxx-lxxvi; D.W. van Winkle, "The Relationship of the Nations to Yahweh and to Israel in Isaiah XL-LV," *VT* 35 (1985) 446-58; Robert G. Boling, "Kings and Prophets, Cyrus and Servant: Reading Isaiah 40-55," *Kī Baruch Hu* (FS Baruch A. Levine; eds. R. Chazan, W.H. Hallo, L.H. Schiffman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 171-188; David F. Payne, "The Meaning of Mission in Isaiah 40-55," *Mission and Meaning* (eds. A. Billington, T. Lane, M. Turner; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995) 3-11; Christopher T. Begg, "The Peoples and the Worship of Yahweh in the Book of Isaiah," *Worship and the Hebrew Bible* (JSOTSS 284; eds. M. Patrick Graham, Rick R. Marrs, and Steven L. McKenzie; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 45-55; Chris Wright, "The Old Testament and Christian Mission," *Evangel* (1996) 39; A.S. Kapelrud, "Second Isaiah and the Suffering Servant," *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1971) 297-303. Other scholars, while positing a complex understanding of the nations in Isaiah 40-55, nevertheless regard Deutero-Isaiah as envisioning the nations as future recipients of salvation; cf. Roy F. Melugin, "Israel and the Nations in Isaiah 40-55," *Problems in Biblical Theology* (eds. H.T.C. Sun and K.L. Eades; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 249-264; Chris Franke, "Is DI 'PC'? Does Israel have most favored nation status? Another look at 'the nations' in Deutero-Isaiah," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 1999* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 272-291; Michael A. Grisanti, "Israel's Mission to the Nations in Isaiah 40-55: An Update," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 9 (1998) 39-61; Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, "Gottesknecht und Gottes Knechte," *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion* (eds. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, P. Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996) 1.43-68; Goldenberg, *Nations* 24, 26. We may also include here those scholars who posit conflicting attitudes regarding the nations in Isaiah 40-55, but who regard concern for the salvation of the gentiles and a mission of Israel to the nations as present either in the portions of Isaiah 40-55 attributed to Deutero-Isaiah himself (Odil Hannes Steck, "Der Gottesknecht als 'Bund' und 'Licht,'" *ŽTK* 90 [1993] 117-34; idem, *Gottesknecht und Zion* [Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1992] 149-72; Ruppert, "Heil" 140-142), in the final stage of redaction (cf. P.E. Dion, "L'universalisme religieux dans les différentes couches rédactionnelles d'Isaïe 40-55," *Bib* 51 [1970] 161-82), or in the mature stages of the prophet's thought (cf.

only the submission and defeat of the nations and not their conversion or salvation.⁵⁰ Debate has focused on a few pivotal passages, where the seemingly universalistic elements of the prophet's message appear most prominently.

In *Isaiah 55:5*, which climaxes the oracle concerning the covenant with David in 55:3-5, gentiles are depicted as running to Israel:

Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which does not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

The passage is somewhat ambiguous, and might be regarded as referring merely to the gentiles' submission to Israel's future political hegemony.⁵¹ However, the presence within the passage of elements of the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, reflected in *Isaiah 2:2-5* and widely elsewhere, strongly suggests that *Isaiah 55:5* involves an expectation of gentile conversion.⁵²

Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Deutero-Isaiah: Major Transitions in the Prophet's Theology and in Contemporary Scholarship," *CBQ* 42 [1980] 1-29; J. Lindblom, *The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah: A New Attempt to Solve an Old Problem* [Lund: Gleerup, 1951] 66-68; A. Gelston, "Universalism in Second Isaiah," *JTS* 43 [1992] 377-98; idem, "The Missionary Message of Second Isaiah," *SJT* 18 [1965] 308-18).

⁵⁰ E.g. R.N. Whybray, *The Second Isaiah* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1983) 63-65; idem, *Isaiah 40-66* (London: Oliphants, 1975); Anton Schoors, *I Am God Your Saviour: A Form-Critical Study of the Main Genres in Is. XL-LV* (SVT 24; Leiden: Brill, 1973) 302-303; Fredrick Holmgren, *With Wings As Eagles. Isaiah 40-55: An Interpretation* (Chappaqua, NY: Biblical Scholars Press, 1973) 26-70; Harry M. Orlinsky, "The So-Called 'Servant of the Lord' and 'Suffering Servant' in Second Isaiah," *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (SVT 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967) 36-50, 97-117; Norman H. Snaith, "A Study of the Teaching of the Second Isaiah and Its Consequences," *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (SVT 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967) 154-65; P.A.H. de Boer, *Second Isaiah's Message* (OTS 11; Leiden: Brill, 1956) 80-101.

⁵¹ This is the interpretation of B. Lindars, "'Good Tidings to Zion': Interpreting Deutero-Isaiah Today," *BjRL* 68 (1986) 494; Orlinsky, "Servant" 109; D.W. van Winkle, "Proselytes in Isaiah XL-LV?: A Study of Isaiah XLIV 1-5," *VT* 47 (1997) 355-357; Holmgren, *Wings as Eagles* 30-32; and Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 303. The passage refers to the expansion of the Persian empire under Darius, according to John D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (Waco: Word, 1987) 246.

⁵² Cf. H.J. Hermisson, "Einheit und Komplexität Deuterjesajas: Probleme der Redaktionsgeschichte von Jes 40-55," *The Book of Isaiah* (ed. J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989) 304. The passage is taken by the majority of expositors as reflecting an expectation of gentile conversion; cf. Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* 284-286; McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 144; Gelston, "Universalism" 386; van Rooy, "Nations" 220; Andrew Wilson, *The Nations in Deutero-Isaiah* (Lewiston: Mellen, 1986) 227-228; Steck, *Gottesknecht und Zion* 158-160, 181.

The coming of the light and salvation of God to the nations is envisioned in *Isaiah 51:4-5*.⁵³

Teaching will go forth from me,
and I will establish my justice for a light to the peoples.
My righteousness is near, my salvation has gone forth,
and my arms will bring about justice for the peoples.
For me the coastlands will wait,
and in my arm they will put their hope.

The universalistic character of this passage is widely recognized.⁵⁴ However, it is occasionally argued that the passage refers to an act of retributive judgement rather than deliverance, which the gentiles await with dread.⁵⁵ The latter interpretation highlights the apparent ambiguity of expressions in these verses such as “my arms will judge the peoples” (וְרַעֲי עַמִּים וְשָׁפֵטוּ), which might seemingly be taken in either sense. However, from a tradition-historical perspective, this and other elements in the passage are clearly related to the eschatological pilgrimage tradition which we have seen reflected in *Isaiah 2:2-5*, *Psalm 67*, and elsewhere, where the nations stream to the mountain of God (*Isa 2:2-3*; cf. *51:5b*), torah goes forth from Zion (*Isa 2:3*; cf. *51:4b*), and God renders judgement in behalf of the peoples (*Isa 2:4*; cf. *51:4-5*).⁵⁶ In this tradition, Yahweh’s “torah” (תּוֹרָה) and “justice” (מִשְׁפָּט) refer to the revelation and enactment of his redemptive will for the peoples (*Isaiah 2:3-4*; cf. *Psalm 67:3-5* [=Eng 67:2-4]; 96:7-13; 98:4-9).⁵⁷ This is accordingly, in light of this

⁵³ There is general consensus that *Isa 51:1-52:12* forms a literary unit. However, *51:4-5* is frequently regarded as a later interpolation within this section; see e.g. Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 155-56; and Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* 235.

⁵⁴ The passage envisions the gentiles’ salvation, according to van Winkle, “Relationship” 447-48; Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 155-57; Beuken, *Jesaja IIB*, 112-115; Wilson, *Nations* 257-59; McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 125; Gelston, “Universalism” 391-96; Begg, “Worship” 47-48; Childs, *Isaiah* 402; Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* 235; van Rooy, “Nations” 220-221; Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier* 27-28.

⁵⁵ Cf. Snaith, “Second Isaiah” 165, 191-92; Whybray similarly understands these verses in terms of the salvation only of Israel and the imposition of God’s sovereign rule upon the nations (*Isaiah 40-66* 155-56). Holmgren understands the passage in terms of deliverance, but interprets “nations” and “coastlands” to refer to Jews living in gentile lands (*Wings as Eagles* 161-65).

⁵⁶ Cf. Gelston, “Universalism” 393; Lohfink, *God of Israel* 47; Wilson, *Nations* 257-259.

⁵⁷ Beyerlein, *Traditionen* 23-32; Jeremias, *Königtum Gottes* 129, 136; Weber, “Psalm LXVII” 563.

tradition-historical background, the sense in which these expressions are to be understood in Isaiah 51:4-5.

Moreover, from a literary standpoint (whatever the diachronic relationship of Isaiah 2:2-5 and 51:4-5 may have been within the composition of the book of Isaiah, which is disputed), Isaiah 51:4-5 clearly echoes the vision of the nations gathering to Zion in the book's opening oracle in 2:2-5. A dense pattern of recurrences link Isa 51:4-5 to the book's opening oracle and its depiction of the teaching, justice and light of Yahweh for the nations.⁵⁸ The attitude of trust in Yahweh reflected in the words of the gentiles in Isa 2:3 is here expressed in the words "and in my arm they will put their hope" (51:5). The verb *יָחַל* ("put their hope") is always used of hopeful expectation, never of dread, and characteristically of the trust-filled hope in him to which Yahweh calls his people Israel (cf. Ps 31:24 [Eng 31:25]; 33:18, 22; 69:3 [Eng 69:4]; 119:43, 74, 81, 114, 147; 130:7). The use within 51:4-5 of eschatological pilgrimage traditions, and the literary connection of Isaiah 51:4-5 to 2:2-5 within the final redactional shaping of the book of Isaiah, are both unmistakable. The passage envisions a future conversion of the nations.

In *Isaiah 45:22-23*, the nations are directly addressed and exhorted to turn to God:

Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn, the word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to me every knee will bow, every tongue pledge faith.

This invitation occurs within the context of Isaiah 44:24-45:25, which announces Yahweh's coming redemption of his people through Cyrus.⁵⁹ The passage 45:18-25 is couched in the form of a trial speech against the nations.⁶⁰ In 45:20-21 the recurrence of the terms "God/god" and "save" contrast idols that cannot deliver with the true, saving God.⁶¹ Throughout Isaiah 40-55, the obligation of exclusive devotion to Yahweh incumbent upon Israel on the basis of the Mosaic

⁵⁸ Cf. "teaching will go forth" (51:4, 2:3); "justice" (51:4; 2:4); "peoples" (51:4-5; 2:2,4); "bring about justice" (51:5; 2:4); "light" (51:4; 2:5).

⁵⁹ Cf. Childs, *Isaiah* 344-356.

⁶⁰ Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 234; J.W. Olley, "Notes on Isaiah XXXII 1, XLV 19, 23 and LXIII 1," *VT* 33 (1983) 450.

⁶¹ Knut Holter, "The Wordplay on *לֹא* ("God") in Isaiah 45, 20-21," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 7 (1993) 88-98.

covenant (e.g. 43:10-13; 48:4-5; cf. Isa 2:6-11; 17:4-11; 30:22; 57:3-13; 65:2-12; Ex 20:3-6; Jer 2:2-13; Hos 13:4) is expressly applied to the gentiles as well, as a consequence of Yahweh's unique identity as the only true God (e.g. Isa 41:24; 44:9-11; 45:16; cf. Isa 2:12-21; 16:12; 21:9; 37:15-20; 66:22-24; Ps 33:8-9).⁶² Previously in Isaiah 40-55, the outcome of this universal claim is judgement upon the nations (cf. 41:24; 44:9-11; 45:16). However, in Isaiah 45:20-22, the claim expressed in 45:21 that Yahweh alone is God leads in 45:22, remarkably, to an invitation to conversion.⁶³

Isaiah 45:22 summons the nations to turn from idols to the true God and be saved.⁶⁴ The passage is unique, in that it is the only invitation to conversion directly addressed to gentiles in the Old Testament.⁶⁵ It is sometimes suggested that "the ends of the earth" addressed in 45:22 are not gentiles but Jews scattered among the nations.⁶⁶ The suggestion is hardly plausible. As noted above, both form and content of Isaiah 45:18-25 show it to be a trial speech against the nations; this identifies the "fugitives of the nations" (45:20) and "ends of the earth" (45:22) to which it is addressed as gentiles.⁶⁷

⁶² Wilson, *Nations* 186-92; cf. Roy F. Melugin, "Israel and the Nations in Isaiah 40-55," *Problems in Biblical Theology* (FS Roy Knierim; eds. Henry T. Sun, Keith L. Eades, James M. Robinson, and Garth L. Moller; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 260-261.

⁶³ This invitation is "astonishing and unexpected, going beyond anything so far seen in Second Isaiah" (Childs, *Isaiah* 355).

⁶⁴ Here, as in 51:4-5 and elsewhere in Deutero-Isaiah, Yahweh's "salvation" (יִשׁוּעַ) for the nations is not to be understood anachronistically, but within the context of the new Exodus, the hope of Israel's national restoration, and Yahweh's coming reign over all the kingdoms of the earth.

⁶⁵ On Isa 45:22-23 as an invitation to conversion, cf. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 84; Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* 176; Aalen, *Licht* 89-90; van Rooy, "Nations" 220; Childs, *Isaiah* 355; Steck, *Gottesknecht* 159; Ruppert, "Heil" 138-139, 144. The best recent discussion of the passage is found in Gelston, "Universalism" 386-91. Whybray's contention that "be saved" (יִשׁוּעַ) in 45:22 "means simply that the whole world will acknowledge Yahweh's triumphant vindication of his people Israel" (*Isaiah 40-66* 112) is clearly special pleading; only a few verses before (the only other occurrence in Isaiah 40-55), the Niph'al of יִשַׁע clearly denotes deliverance, where it is declared that "Israel has been saved by the Lord" (45:17).

⁶⁶ Cf. Whybray, *Second Isaiah* 64; D.E. Hollenberg, "Nationalism and 'The Nations' in Isaiah XL-LV," *VT* 19 (1969) 31-32; similarly Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 236; Martin-Achard, *Light* 16-17; Snaith, "Second Isaiah" 160, 185-186. This interpretation is regarded as "possible" by Holmgren (*Wings as Eagles* 41-42).

⁶⁷ Isaiah 45:18-25 is in form a trial speech (Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 234). These are of two types in Isaiah 40-55, trial speeches against Israel and trial speeches against the nations. The trial speeches against Israel (42:18-25; 43:22-28; 50:1-3)

The conversion of the nations elsewhere in Isaiah, as we have seen, is an expectation of the future (2:2-5; 11:9-10; 51:4-5; 55:5), and 45:18-25 envisions the response of the nations to Yahweh's coming redemption of his people through a new Exodus (44:24-45:25). In this wider literary context, the invitation to conversion in 45:22 does not function as an actual appeal to gentiles, but rather, like the invitations to praise and worship Yahweh addressed to gentiles in the Psalms (e.g. 66:4; 67:4-6; 96:1-2, 7-10; 98:4-6), anticipates the inauguration of Yahweh's universal reign, when the nations will turn to the God of Jacob (cf. 2:3; 51:4-5; Ps 66:1-8; 67:1-7; 86:9; 102:15-16, 21-22). This is made clear by the following verse, which envisions a coming universal homage to God among all the peoples of the earth (45:23, "to me every knee will bow, every tongue will pledge faith"). The concentric structure of the stanza 45:22-25 marks this universal worship as the central element within the passage.⁶⁸ The homage in 45:23 is depicted as absolutely universal ("every knee . . . every tongue"), and 45:24 envisions that Yahweh will reveal his divine identity to the nations through both the deliverance of those who come to him (45:24a) and judgement on the rebellious (45:24b).⁶⁹ However, the setting of this vision within the context of the invitation to conversion in 45:22 (cf. 45:24a) throws the accent, not upon judgement, but upon the salvation of the nations.

justify the judgement of exile inflicted upon Israel by God. In the trial speeches against the nations (41:1-5; 41:21-29; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25) the issue in dispute is Yahweh's claim to be the one and only God, against the claims of idols (Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 181-245). That Isa 45:18-25 is a trial speech against the nations is not disputed, but the obvious consequences of this fact for the identification of its addressees are curiously enough not always appreciated. Moreover, the phrase פְּלִיטֵי הַגּוֹיִם ("fugitives of the nations") is most naturally understood in a partitive sense; cf. the parallel phrase in Judges 12:4-5, and see Gelston, "Universalism" 386-87.

⁶⁸ Kenneth E. Bailey, "'Inverted Parallelisms' and 'Encased Parables' in Isaiah and Their Significance for Old Testament and New Testament Translation and Interpretation," *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible* (eds. L.J. Regt, J. de Waard and J.P. Fokkelman; Assen: Eisenbrauns, 1996) 22-23.

⁶⁹ Cf. Beuken, *Ḥesaja* IIA, 257; Childs, *Isaiah* 356. This is a consistent theme in Isaiah 40-66: cf. 60:10-12; 66:23-24. "In the prophetic vision of the future there remain those who do not share in the blessing, even though the promise is for all humanity" (Childs, *Isaiah* 379). On the compatibility of expectations of judgement and conversion of the gentiles in Jewish thought, see chapter three below.

2.4 *The Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 40-55*

We have seen that in Isaiah 40-55, as elsewhere in Isaiah, the conversion of the nations is portrayed as a future divine work in which Israel plays little or no active role. In Second Isaiah, the conversion of the nations is the fruit of the new Exodus, the coming of Yahweh to Zion, and the inauguration of his eschatological reign. However, in a number of passages Second Isaiah also highlights a figure whom Yahweh describes as his servant, and to whom the conversion of the nations is entrusted (42:1-9; 49:1-6 [7-13]; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12; cf. 61:1-3). In the so-called "Servant Songs," as is widely recognized, the message of Second Isaiah regarding the destiny of the nations reaches its climax.

Discussion of the complex literary, historical and interpretive issues surrounding the Servant Songs is beyond the scope of this study.⁷⁰ The abundance of thematic and literary connections which link the Servant Songs to one another and to the rest of Isaiah 40-55, support the long-held consensus that these Songs comprise a clearly demarcated series of poems within Isaiah 40-55, as well as the more controversial view that, whatever the history of their composition, these poems must not be interpreted in isolation, but within the context of Second Isaiah as a literary whole.⁷¹ The precise delimitation of the first three Songs varies slightly among interpreters; the parameters of the Songs assumed here (42:1-9; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12) follows Antti Laato's analysis of the compositional structure of Isaiah 40-55.⁷²

⁷⁰ The most recent survey of the immense scholarly literature on the Servant Songs is found in Herbert Haag, *Der Gottesknecht bei Deuterjesaja* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985). Older but still standard surveys are H.H. Rowley, "The Servant of the Lord in the Light of Three Decades of Criticism," *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays* (2nd ed.; London: Blackwell, 1965) 3-60, and Christopher R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* (2nd ed.; London: Oxford, 1956).

⁷¹ On the literary features and unity of dramatic movement which connect the Servant Songs together, see Bernd Janowski, "Er trug unsere Sünden: Jes 53 und die Dramatik der Stellvertretung," *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte* (eds. B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996) 32-33; Henning Graf Reventlow, "Basic Issues in the Interpretation of Isaiah 40-55," *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (ed. William H. Bellinger, Jr. and William R. Farmer; Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998) 23-26. On the function of the Songs within the wider literary context of Second Isaiah, see Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA, 106-133; IIB, 11-30, 183-241.

⁷² "The Composition of Isaiah 40-55," *JBL* 109 (1990) 207-228.

Many scholars delimit the first Servant Song to Isaiah 42:1-4, regarding 42:5-9 as an independent oracle. However, while perhaps originally independent oracles, in their final redactional context Isaiah 42:1-4 and 42:5-9 are clearly closely related.⁷³ The key element in the description of the Servant in the first stanza (42:1-4), as its structure shows, is that he will bring forth justice (מִשְׁפָּט) to the nations (42:1b, 3b, 4b).⁷⁴ The conclusion of the stanza through parallelism associates this with the Servant's teaching or instruction (תּוֹרָה, 42:4b) in which the coastlands will put their hope (יָחַל, 42:4b). It has been supposed that מִשְׁפָּט here refers to God's retribution against the nations, and תּוֹרָה to a verdict of condemnation, which the gentiles await (יָחַל) only with fear.⁷⁵ Other interpreters have understood מִשְׁפָּט in these verses as Yahweh's sovereign rule over the nations, and תּוֹרָה as the announcement of that rule.⁷⁶ Such readings are hardly convincing. From a tradition-historical standpoint, the depiction of the Servant in 42:1-4 draws heavily on language and imagery associated with the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations (cf. Isa 2:2-5; 51:4-5; Psalm 67:3-5 [Eng 67:2-4], 96:7-13; 98:4-9). As we have seen, these motifs reflect traditions of conversion, and describe the salvific and illumining activity of Yahweh on behalf of the nations. The verb יָחַל with which the stanza closes expresses the trust-filled hope of the nations in Yahweh, and thus brings these motifs to a remarkable and climactic conclusion.⁷⁷ Moreover, within the literary presentation of the book of Isaiah in its final form, a striking number of thematic and lexical connections link 42:1-4 to Isaiah 2:2-5, and thus portray the Servant's work as bringing about the conversion of the nations envisioned in that programmatic passage.⁷⁸ As such the Servant's

⁷³ Cf. Childs, *Isaiah* 326.

⁷⁴ The Servant's task of bringing justice to the nations frames the stanza at its beginning (42:1b) and close (42:4b), and stands at its center (42:3b). On the crucial place of this motif of the first Song within the development of the theme of Yahweh's justice in Isa 40-42, see Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA, 106-119; Childs, *Isaiah* 323-325.

⁷⁵ So Snaith, "Second Isaiah" 164-65.

⁷⁶ Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* 72-73; idem, *Second Isaiah* 65; cf. J. Blenkinsopp, "Second Isaiah—Prophet of Universalism," *JSTOT* 41 (1988) 90.

⁷⁷ Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA, 116. See the discussion of the verb יָחַל above, p. 75.

⁷⁸ Cf. "justice"/"bring about justice" (42:1,3,4; 2:4); "teaching" (42:4; 2:3); "bring forth"/"go forth" (42:1,3; 2:3); "nations" (42:1; 2:2,4; cf. 42:6); "in his teaching . . . put their hope"/"Come, let us go up . . . and he will teach" (42:4; 2:3). Cf. also "people"/"peoples" (42:5-6; 2:3-4); "walk" (42:5; 2:3); "light" (42:6; 2:5). Cf. Lohfink, *God of Israel* 46-47; Begg, "Worship" 46.

activity is also presented, within the final redactional shaping of the book, in relation to the vision of salvation for the peoples in Isaiah 51:4-5.⁷⁹ In Isaiah 2:2-5 and 51:4-5, as we have seen, the justice (מִשְׁפָּט, 51:4-5; cf. 2:4) and teaching (תּוֹרָה, 51:4b; 2:3) which God will bring to the gentiles, and their response of trust and hope (יָחַל, 51:5b; cf. 2:3), describe the activity of God for the conversion of the nations. Isaiah 42:1-4 thus describes, as the great majority of interpreters have recognized, the divine salvation and truth which the gentiles are to receive through the Servant.⁸⁰

The second stanza (42:5-9) in its opening strophe grounds the Servant's mission to the nations, as we saw Isa 45:21 (cf. 45:18) did the call to conversion at 45:22, in Yahweh's unique identity as the creator of all the peoples of the earth (42:5). The phrase "covenant of the people" (בְּרִית עַם) in 42:6 has received various interpretations. Elsewhere in Isaiah 40-55 the word עַם in the singular normally refers to Israel, and a number of interpreters take the word in this phrase as referring to the Jewish nation.⁸¹ However, that the word here has a collective sense and refers to the gentiles is clear from 1) the contextual link with the preceding use of the word in 42:5, where it refers to all the people on earth—עַם in 42:6 takes up עַם in the verse preceding and thus means "a covenant with the people on earth"; 2) the synonymous parallelism with אֹר גוֹיִם, "a light to the *gentiles*"; and 3) the context of the entire first Servant passage, in which the mission of the Servant is throughout to the gentiles (cf. 42:1b; 42:4b; 42:8). עַם in 42:6 thus refers to all the peoples of the earth, as most interpreters have recognized.⁸² While several alternative meanings

⁷⁹ Motifs linking 42:1-4 to 51:4-5 include: "justice" (42:1,3,4; 51:4); "teaching" (42:4; 51:4); "bring forth"/"go forth" (42:1,3; 51:4); "coastlands" (42:4; 51:5); "put their hope" (42:4; 51:5); cf. "people"/"peoples" (42:6; 51:4); "light to the nations/peoples" (42:6; 51:4). Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA, 116.

⁸⁰ Cf. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 37-38; Wilson, *Nations* 257; Aalen, *Licht* 91-93; van Rooy, "Nations" 221; Steck, "Gottesknecht" 121-25; Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA, 116-126; Melugin, "Nations" 254; idem, "The Servant, God's Call, and the Structure of Isaiah 40-48," *SBL 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991) 26; Payne, "Mission in Isaiah" 7-8; B. Renaud, "La Mission du Serviteur en Is 42,1-4," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 64 (1990) 106-108; Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "An Intertextual Reading of 'A Crushed Reed' and 'A Dim Wick' in Isaiah 42.3," *JSTOT* 83 (1999) 113-124; Begg, "Worship" 45-46; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 32.

⁸¹ E.g. Orlinsky, "Servant" 107-11; Snaith, "Second Isaiah" 157-59; Holmgren, *Wings as Eagles* 66-68.

⁸² McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 39; Gelston, "Universalism" 394; Westerman, *Isaiah* 40-66 100; Childs, *Isaiah* 326; Wilson, *Nations* 260-61; van Winkle, "Relationship"

for בְּרִית in this passage have been proposed,⁸³ it is more likely that the word here retains its usual sense of “covenant.” The Servant is thus depicted in this passage as the embodiment of God’s redemptive covenant with all humanity.⁸⁴ The phrase “light to the nations” in 42:6 is clearly related, within the final composition of the book of Isaiah, to the imagery of light associated with the conversion of gentiles in Isaiah 2:2-5, 8:23b-9:1, and 51:4-5.⁸⁵ The first Servant Song thus takes up and develops this key theme within the book of Isaiah, associating the Servant’s activity as a light to the gentiles with the conversion of the nations envisioned in these passages.

This and other themes of the first Song are taken up in the second Servant passage (*Isaiah* 49:1-6). The second Song has a threefold recapitulating structure, in which the key themes of 49:1-4 are repeated in 49:5 and again in 49:6.⁸⁶ As in the first Song, the gentiles are the central focus. The Song is addressed to the peoples in the far off coastlands (49:1), and references to the gentiles in the opening and closing strophes frame the oracle (49:1, 49:6).⁸⁷ The Servant’s

454-56; Aalen, *Licht* 92; Whybray, *Isaiah* 40-66 74-75 (differently idem, *Second Isaiah* 65); Ruppert, “Heil” 143.

⁸³ E.g. D.R. Hillers, “‘Berit ‘am’: Emancipation of the People,” *JBL* 97 (1978) 175-82; H. Torczyner, “Presidential Address,” *JPOS* 16 (1936) 7 (“splendor of the peoples”). Whybray (*Isaiah* 40-66 74-75) interprets the term of “obligations” imposed upon the nations by the servant, following the explanation of the word adopted by E. Kutsch, “Gesetz und Gnade: Probleme des alttestamentlichen Bundesbegriffs,” *ZAW* 79 (1967) 18-35; for criticism of Kutsch’s view, see Hillers, “Emancipation” 175-76; M. Weinfeld, “Covenant vs. Obligation,” *Bib* 56 (1975) 124-25.

⁸⁴ In contrast to Whybray’s interpretation of בְּרִית in 42:6 as involving obligations forcibly imposed by the Servant on the nations (see previous note), the parallelism in 42:6 of בְּרִית (“covenant”) with אֹר (“light”), and the description of the servant in 42:1-4, would rather suggest that the word refers to a self-obligation of the Servant by which the nations benefit; see van Winkle, “Relationship” 456; Wilson, *Nations* 260-62; Ruppert, “Heil” 143; Kim, “Isaiah 42.3” 116-124.

⁸⁵ Cf. “light” (42:6; 2:5; 51:4; cf. 9:1); “nations” (42:6; 2:2,4; cf. 8:23); “people”/“peoples” (42:5-6; 2:3-4; 51:4; cf. 9:1). See above, pp. 61-62, 64-65, 75.

⁸⁶ Francis Landy, “The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three Suffering Servant Songs,” *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings* (ed. Philip R. Davies and David J.A. Clines; JSOTS 144; Sheffield; JSOT, 1993) 64-68; cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 22-23.

⁸⁷ The verbs addressed to the nations in 49:1 when paired denote giving heed to a message from the heart (cf. 1 Sam 15:22; Jer 6:10; Zech 1:4; Isa 32:3; 43:23). Thus the address in 49:1 is not merely formulaic, but calls upon the gentiles to respond in faith to the Servant’s message (cf. 42:4b “in his teaching the coastlands will put their hope”). Cf. also the invitation to conversion in 45:22, and the invitations to praise and worship Yahweh addressed to the gentiles in the Psalms (e.g. 66:4; 67:4-6; 96:1-2, 7-10; 98:4-6).

mission involves a powerful prophetic activity for the nations (49:2, "he made my *mouth* a sharp sword"; cf. 42:4b "his teaching").⁸⁸ The dramatic movement of the poem centers in the dissonance between the glory of God to be revealed in the Servant (49:3) and the vanity and fruitlessness of his labors which the Servant experiences (49:4). The recapitulation of 49:4 ("my strength") in 49:5 ("my God is my strength") discloses the Servant's trust that in his weakness the power of God is at work. This leads to the final recapitulation and the climax of the poem in 49:6: the Servant will not only restore Israel, but will be a "light to the nations," bringing Yahweh's salvation to the ends of the earth (49:6b).

To be sure, some interpreters have suggested that "the nations" in this passage does not refer to gentiles, but to Israelites scattered among them.⁸⁹ Others have thought that the passage contemplates only the salvation of Israel, which will be reported to the ends of the earth, startling and bedazzling the nations as a bright light.⁹⁰ However, as the great majority of interpreters have recognized, the passage envisions the coming of salvation for all peoples through the Servant.⁹¹ This interpretation is strongly supported by the parallelism of "light" and "salvation" in 49:6. From a semantic standpoint, it is also supported by the occurrence elsewhere in Isaiah 40-55 of the very similar phrase אֵר צְמִים in conjunction with traditional conversion imagery and with clear reference to the salvation of the nations (Isa 51:4-5).⁹² On a literary level, the phrase "light to the nations" is a direct literary echo of the identical phrase in the first Servant Song (42:6), and also recalls, within the final redactional shape of the book, the use of light imagery elsewhere in Isaiah with reference to the salvation of the nations (Isa 2:5; 9:1; 51:4, "light to the peoples").⁹³ Similarly, the phrase "salvation to the ends of the

⁸⁸ Cf. Childs, *Isaiah* 383; Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 16-17.

⁸⁹ Holmgren, *Wings as Eagles* 54-59.

⁹⁰ So Snaith, "Second Isaiah" 155-57; Orlinsky, "Servant" 99-102; cf. de Boer, *Message* 92. Whybray similarly interprets the light which comes to the gentiles only of their forced acknowledgement of Yahweh's universal sovereignty (*Isaiah* 40-66 139; cf. p. 75; *Second Isaiah* 67).

⁹¹ Cf. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 105-106; Westerman, *Isaiah* 40-66 211-12; van Winkle, "Relationship" 452-54; Aalen, *Licht* 92-93; van Rooy, "Nations" 222; Steck, "Gottesknecht" 123; Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 26-27; Melugin, "Nations" 257; Begg, "Worship" 47; Childs, *Isaiah* 385; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 32.

⁹² See the discussion above, pp. 74-75.

⁹³ See the discussions above, pp. 61-62, 64-65, 75, 81. Cf. Clements, "Light" 67-69;

earth" echoes the invitation to conversion in 45:22: "Turn to me and be *saved*, all the *ends of the earth!*" The Servant will not only restore the remnant of Israel (49:5-6a), but God will also make him a light for the conversion and salvation of the gentiles (49:6b).

As we have seen, while interest in gentile conversion is frequent in the Old Testament, this nowhere involves the idea of a calling, command or mission to bring about the conversion of the nations. By contrast, in Isaiah 49:1-6, as in 42:1-9, the Servant is portrayed as commissioned to bring the light of Yahweh's salvation to the gentiles.⁹⁴ The Servant "is called to an active missionary vocation . . . to the heathen."⁹⁵ The Servant's "mission as a light to the nations forms the true climax of his divine calling as servant to the God of all creation."⁹⁶ The consciousness of mission for the nations present here is not present in any of the other passages we have examined, and is in fact unique in the Old Testament.⁹⁷ Moreover, the mission of the Servant involves an active vocation of verbal proclamation to the gentiles (42:4b; 49:2; cf. 50:4; 2:3).⁹⁸ This too is unique in the Hebrew Bible. While the Psalms, as we have seen, call upon Israel to declare the praises of God among the gentiles, only in the Servant Songs do we encounter an explicit commission to prophetic activity whose aim is the conversion of the nations. However, this does not involve in the Songs the concept of a present obligation or mission to the surrounding nations. Rather, in Isaiah 40-55 the mission of the Servant occurs in the context of Yahweh's

Childs, *Isaiah* 382-383. Note the dense concentration of echoes of 2:2-5 in 49:6: "nations" (2:2, 4), "Jacob" (2:3, 5), "light" (2:5).

⁹⁴ Cf. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 104-106; Renaud, "Mission" 101-113; Melugin, "Nations" 254, 257; Kapelrud, "Second Isaiah" 301-302; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 31-32, 39.

⁹⁵ North, *Suffering Servant* 73.

⁹⁶ Childs, *Isaiah* 385.

⁹⁷ Cf. Aalen, *Licht* 89-93; Rowley, *Missionary Message*, 51, 55-64; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 31, 39-40.

⁹⁸ Cf. Reventlow, "Basic Issues" 30: "the commission the Servant received in the first two Songs . . . was an active mission to be effected by the word." See also Ruppert, "Heil" 140-141; Motyer, *Isaiah* 383: ". . . the Servant is described . . . as a Spirit-endowed agent of divine revelation for whose teaching earth waits." Yahweh's Servant is "sein activer Zeuge, der durch seine Verkündigung die heilsame Rechtsordnung Jahwes bis an die Enden der Erde aufrichtet" (H.-J. Hermisson, "Das vierte Gottesknechtslied im deuterocesajanischen Kontext," *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte* [eds. B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996] 22).

coming redemption of his people through the New Exodus. Within the context of Second Isaiah, the Servant's mission is an eschatological event, involving the conversion of the nations in the impending time of Yahweh's new world order and coming reign over the kingdoms of the earth.

The fourth Servant Song (*Isaiah 52:13-53:12*) constitutes the climax and culmination of the four Servant poems within the literary context of *Isaiah 40-55*.⁹⁹ Discussion of the many issues surrounding the fourth Servant Song, the most controversial passage in the Old Testament, as well as of its function within the literary context of *Isaiah 40-55*, are both beyond the scope of this study. The analysis here will merely focus on some of the poem's key features, with special attention to the relationship of the nations to the Servant's activity in this Song.

Although there is some disagreement among interpreters regarding the details of the poem's structure, there is virtual unanimity that the basic arrangement of the passage consists of a threefold concentric structure, in which two divine oracles concerning the suffering and exaltation of the Servant at the opening (52:13-15) and closing (53:10-12 [or 53:11c-12]) of the poem frame the confession of those who have received redemption through the Servant's sufferings at the poem's center (53:1-9 [or 11b]).¹⁰⁰ A variety of literary repetitions link the divine oracles at the opening and closing of the Song and confirm their inclusive function.¹⁰¹ "The framing effect of the 'divine speech' at the beginning and end of the Song is further enhanced by the contrast between the language of exaltation in the frame (52:13-15; 53:10-12) and the language of humiliation in the

⁹⁹ The opening words of the fourth Song (52:13a) echo the opening of the first Song (42:1a); cf. Reventlow, "Basic Issues" 25; Childs, *Isaiah* 412; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 31-32. This and other literary connections give the Servant Songs "the impressive unity of a great cathedral" (North, *Suffering Servant* 188).

¹⁰⁰ See for example Anthony R. Ceresko, "The Rhetorical Strategy of the Fourth Servant Song (*Isaiah 52:13-53:12*): Poetry and the Exodus-New Exodus," *CBQ* 56 (1994) 50-51; Childs, *Isaiah* 411; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 37; Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 197-200; Claus Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969) 255; Ronald Bergey, "The Rhetorical Role of Reiteration in the Suffering Servant Poem (*Isa 52:13-53:12*)," *JETS* 40 (1997) 177-178; Lothar Ruppert, "Mein Knecht, der gerechte, macht die Vielen gerecht, und ihre Verschuldungen—er trägt sie (*Jes 53,11*): Universales Heil durch das stellvertretende Strafleiden des Gottesknechtes?" *Biblische Zeitschrift* 40 (1996) 3-4.

¹⁰¹ For these, see Ceresko, "Strategy" 51; Bergey, "Rhetorical Role" 186.

intervening verses (53:1-9).¹⁰² The concentric structure of the Song highlights the central portion (53:1-9), in which the emphasis is on the Servant's sufferings.

Many scholars also recognize within 53:1-9 a concentric arrangement highlighting the central verses 53:4-6.¹⁰³ These verses disclose the hidden redemptive purpose in the Servant's sufferings: "he was wounded for our transgressions" (53:5). This conception of the Servant's vicarious suffering, which is without parallel elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, is clearly, in view of its emphasis within the central section (53:4-6), and its repetition throughout the remainder of the poem (53:8, 53:10-12), the dominant theme of the fourth Song.¹⁰⁴

The Servant's sufferings are portrayed as culminating in his violent death (53:8-9).¹⁰⁵ However, the closing divine oracle sharply contrasts the sufferings and death of the Servant with the exaltation to follow.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Ceresko, "Strategy" 51.

¹⁰³ So for example Paul R. Raabe, "The Effect of Repetition in the Suffering Servant Song," *JBL* 103 (1984) 78; Ceresko, "Strategy" 52-53; Ruppert, "Mein Knecht" 4; Motyer, *Isaiah* 423-424.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 40-44. The vicarious, substitutionary character of the Servant's sufferings in the fourth Song is widely recognized. The most notable exception is R.N. Whybray, *Thanksgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An Interpretation of Isaiah 53* (JSOTSS 4; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1978). Whybray's arguments are convincingly refuted by Antti Laato, *The Servant of YHWH and Cyrus* (ConBOT 35; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1992) 142-150. On the uniqueness of this conception in the Old Testament, see Hermisson, "vierte Gottesknechtslied" 20-21; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 28; Daniel P. Bailey, "The Suffering Servant: Recent Tübingen Scholarship on Isaiah 53," *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (ed. William H. Bellinger, Jr. and William R. Farmer; Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998) 253-254. On the centrality of the Servant's vicarious sufferings within the theological message of Isaiah 40-55, see Childs, *Isaiah* 418.

¹⁰⁵ This is widely acknowledged; cf. Ceresko, "Strategy" 44-45; Hermisson, "vierte Gottesknechtslied" 16; Janowski, "Stellvertretung" 40; Hans Walter Wolff, *Jesaja 53 in Urchristentum* (3rd ed.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1952) 24-25; Childs, *Isaiah* 416; North, *Suffering Servant* 148-149; Motyer, *Isaiah* 434-435. The text also employs forensic imagery which depicts the Servant's death as a miscarriage of justice (53:7-8); see Ceresko, "Strategy" 46-47; Childs, *Isaiah* 416; North, *Suffering Servant* 150; D. Winton Thomas, "A Consideration of Isaiah LIII in the Light of Recent Textual and Philological Study," *Ephemerides theologiae Lovanienses* 44 (1968) 84. The judicial character of his execution is also suggested by the Servant's shameful burial as a criminal (53:9); cf. Westerman, *Isaiah 40-66* 257, 266; Ceresko, "Strategy" 46-47.

¹⁰⁶ This contrast is heightened by the poem's structure, in which divine proclamations of the Servant's exaltation (52:13-15; 53:10-12) frame the narrative of his sufferings (53:1-9), and also by verbal repetitions denoting alternately the Servant's humiliation and his exaltation; on the latter see Raabe, "Repetition" 77-80.

The fourth Song portrays the Servant, following his sufferings, as restored to life (53:10-11) and gloriously exalted (52:13, 15; 53:12). Given the generally undeveloped character of concepts of resurrection in ancient Judaism prior to the post-exilic period, a number of interpreters have questioned whether the text can actually speak of the Servant's return to life.¹⁰⁷ However, that the Servant is portrayed in the fourth Song as restored from death to life is recognized by the majority of interpreters.¹⁰⁸ The text is explicit that following his demise the Servant "will prolong days" (יַצְרִיךָ יָמִים, 53:10) and "will see light" (יִרְאֶה אֹרֶךְ, 53:11).¹⁰⁹ Through its repetition in the divine oracles which frame the poem, the Servant's exaltation is strongly emphasized. At the same time, the transformation from suffering and death to exaltation is left entirely unexplained in the text. The concluding strophe of the Song grounds the exaltation of the Servant in his voluntary act of self-abasement in pouring himself out to death for the sin of the many (53:12).

How are the nations related to the activity of the Servant in the fourth Song? In the opening divine oracle, many nations and kings through the Servant come to see and comprehend (52:15). Several factors indicate that the "many nations" spoken of here are understood as brought to the worship of Yahweh through the Servant. Tradition-historically, the depiction of "nations" and "kings" beholding the glory of Yahweh belongs to the eschatological pilgrimage tradition (Isa 60:3, 10, 11, 16; Ps 47:8-9; 102:15-16; 102:22; 138:4-5; cf. Ps 22:27-28; 66:1-4). Moreover, from a literary standpoint the phrase "many nations" (גוֹיִם רַבִּים), within the final composition of the book of Isaiah, recalls the first two Servant passages (42:6, 49:6), as well as the eschatological pilgrimage oracle in Isaiah 2:2-5 (עַמִּים רַבִּים, 2:3, 4). In all of these passages the gentiles are the recipi-

¹⁰⁷ For discussion and literature, see Reventlow, "Basic Issues" 26-27.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. North, *Suffering Servant* 147-148; Laato, *Servant* 139-140; Reventlow, "Basic Issues" 26-27; Wolff, *Jesaja 53* 24-25; Childs, *Isaiah* 419; G.W. Ahlström, "Notes to Isaiah 53:8f.," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 13 (1969) 96 (n. 15); W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, *The Servant of God* (London: SCM, 1957) 32-33; Motyer, *Isaiah* 440-441.

¹⁰⁹ אֹרֶךְ ("light"), omitted in MT, is attested by IQIsa-a, IQIsa-b, 4QIsa-d, and LXX, and is doubtless the original reading. References to "light" thus recur in all four Servant poems (42:6; 49:6; 50:10-11; 53:11). See for further discussion Emanuel Tov, "The Text of Isaiah at Qumran," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 2.507-508; for a defense of the MT reading as original, see I.L. Seeligmann, "δειξαι αὐτῷ φῶς," *Tarbiz* 27 (1958) 127-141.

ents of salvation, and in Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 the means of their conversion is specifically the work of the Servant.¹¹⁰ Finally, careful repetition of key terms closely connects the opening and closing stanzas to one another, and suggests that the “many” (רַבִּים) who receive redemption through the Servant in the closing divine oracle in 53:10-12 recall and include the “many nations” (גוֹיִם רַבִּים) of 52:13-15.¹¹¹

The depiction in the opening stanza of “many nations” who through the Servant see and comprehend is followed by the first-person confession in 53:1-9. Who are the speakers in 53:1-9 and how are they related to the “many nations” of 52:13-15 and the “many” of 53:10-12?¹¹² The reference in the confession to “my people” (53:8) would seem most naturally to identify the speakers as Israelites.¹¹³ At the same time, the movement of thought within the Song closely links the Servant’s activity in their behalf with the revelation which in 52:13-15 the “many nations” receive through the Servant. The assertion that what the gentiles had not previously heard they will come to understand (52:15) has the literary effect of building expectancy that what the gentiles are to understand will be disclosed in the confession concerning the Servant in 53:1-9. This is also suggested by the clear linkage of שְׁמוֹעָה in 53:1 to שָׁמַע in 52:15, which identifies the report which the speakers share in 53:1-9 with the message which the gentiles see and understand in 52:15.

Moreover, the studied repetition of crucial terms regarding the Servant’s redemptive activity also closely links the central confession to the closing stanza, and functions to include the “we” in 53:1-9 among the “many” who receive the benefit of the Servant’s

¹¹⁰ It has been suggested that the Servant’s “sprinkling” of the nations (הִזָּה, 52:15) also implies the redemptive significance of his work in their behalf; see H.W. Hertzberg, “Die ‘Abtrünnigen’ und die ‘Vielen’: Ein Beitrag zu Jes 53,” *Verbannung und Heimkehr* (FS W. Rudolph; ed. J. Kuschke; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1961) 103. However, for the strong arguments against the MT reading or for a secondary meaning of the verb in Isa 52:15, see, conveniently, Hermisson, “vierte Gottesknechtslied” 9; Childs, *Isaiah* 412-413.

¹¹¹ “Many” (רַבִּים) occurs twice in the first stanza (52:14, 52:15) and three times in the last (53:11, 53:12). The designation “my Servant” (עַבְדִּי) is found once in each stanza (52:13, 53:11). The verb שָׁמַע occurs twice, once at the beginning of the first stanza (52:13) and at the close of the final stanza (53:12). Cf. Ceresko, “Strategy” 51; Laato, *Servant* 162; Childs, *Isaiah* 419-420.

¹¹² According to North this is “the most vigorously debated question arising from the last song” (*Suffering Servant* 150).

¹¹³ Reventlow, “Basic Issues” 29.

vicarious suffering in 53:10-12.¹¹⁴ We have already seen that in the closing oracle the repetition of key terms from the opening divine oracle functions to include the “many nations” of 52:13-15 among the “many” of 53:10-12. Through literary recurrence the Song thus links both the illumination of the “many nations” in 52:13-15, and the first-person confession of Israel in 53:1-9, with the description of the Servant’s redemption of the “many” in the closing divine oracle in 53:10-12. The twofold mission of the Servant, to Israel and to the nations, already disclosed in 49:5-6, is thus in the fourth Song given powerful literary expression. By the close of the poem, the reader comprehends that the “many” of the climactic final oracle (53:10-12) includes both Israel and the gentiles.¹¹⁵ As in the first two Servant passages, the Servant in the fourth Song is thus entrusted with a mission of universal scope, embracing Israel and all nations.

The most contested aspect of the Servant Songs remains the identity of the Servant.¹¹⁶ In Isaiah 40-55, outside the Servant Songs, Yahweh’s Servant is consistently identified with Israel (41:8; 41:9; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1-2; 44:21; 44:26; 45:4; 48:20), and this has led many interpreters to conclude that the Servant of the Songs is likewise a collective figure, whose experiences poetically represent the destiny of the righteous remnant of the nation.¹¹⁷ Other interpreters regard the Servant of the Songs as an individual, distinct from yet closely

¹¹⁴ נָשָׂא “bear” 53:4, 53:12; קָבַל “carry” 53:4, 53:11b; פָּגַע “intervene” 53:6, 53:12; מָרַד “rebellion” 53:5, 53:8, 53:12; עָוֹן “iniquity” 53:5, 53:6, 53:11b. Note the chiasmic structure of the verbal recurrences in 53:4 and 53:11b-12: נָשָׂא (53:4), קָבַל (53:4), קָבַל (53:11b), נָשָׂא (53:12). Cf. Ruppert, “Mein Knecht” 13; Bergey, “Rhetorical Role” 186-188; John W. Olley, “‘The Many’: How is Isa 53,12a to be Understood?” *Bib* 68 (1987) 353-355.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 237; Olley, “Many” 354: “. . . the ‘many’ is a wide term embracing the nations, and including rebellious Israel. It is a term peculiarly appropriate for such a general meaning, a possible reason for its usage in chap. 53.”

¹¹⁶ For the great variety of identifications of the Servant proposed by modern interpreters, see North, *Suffering Servant*; 28-116; Whybray, *Second Isaiah* 68-78; and Haag, *Gottesknecht* 101-167.

¹¹⁷ Among more recent literature, see Philip Stern, “The ‘Blind Servant’ Imagery of Deutero-Isaiah and Its Implications,” *Bib* 75 (1994) 224-232; Ulrika Lindblad, “A Note on the Nameless Servant in Isaiah XLII 1-4,” *VT* 43 (1993) 115-19; E.G. Singgih, “The Character of the Servant’s Mission in Isaiah 42,” *Asia Journal of Theology* 14 (2000) 3-19; Melugin, “Nations” 254-259; Ruppert, “Heil” 139, 146-148 (late redaction of the Songs); Kapelrud, “Second Isaiah” 297-303; Steck, “Gottesknecht” 121-125 (late redaction of the Songs).

identified with the nation of Israel.¹¹⁸ The complexity of the modern debate reflects the mysterious, enigmatic character of these Songs.¹¹⁹ The identity of the Servant, as well as the precise way in which he is to carry out his commission for the nations, is in Isaiah 40-55 hardly self-evident. As we will see, the complex and mysterious nature of the Servant Songs is reflected in the great diversity of ways in which they would be interpreted in the second temple period.

2.5 Conclusion

Contrary to what one might expect in view of the general absence of evidence for active proselytizing in ancient Judaism, interest in the conversion of gentiles is widely evident in the Hebrew Bible, especially the book of Isaiah. As this entire chapter has shown, the startling revisionist claim of Goldenberg that “the Hebrew Scriptures

¹¹⁸ The tendency of the more recent literature is toward an individual interpretation, especially in regard to the third and fourth Songs; cf. Reventlow, “Basic Issues” 24; Janowski, “Stellvertretung” 33-36; Hermisson, “vierte Gottesknechtslied” 23; Klaus Baltzer, “Jes 52,13: Die ‘Erhöhung’ des ‘Gottes-knechtes,’” *Religious Propaganda and Missionary Competition in the New Testament World* (FS Dieter Georgi; eds. Lukas Bormann, Kelly del Tredici, and Angela Standhartinger; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1994) 45-56; Ceresko, “Strategy” 43; Ruppert, “Heil” 140-142 (autobiographical in original form, applied to Cyrus and Israel in later redactions). Scholars who adopt an individual interpretation for some but not all of the Servant Songs include: Tod Linafelt, “Speech and Silence in the Servant Passages: Towards a Final-Form Reading of the Book of Isaiah,” *Koinonia* 5 (1993) 176-185 (a shift in identity of the Servant at 49:4 from the community to the prophet in the remainder of the Songs); Childs, *Isaiah* 323-423 (a shift in identity at 49:3 from Israel as a whole to an individual embodying Israel); Jürgen Werlitz, “Vom Knecht der Lieder zum Knecht des Buches,” *ZAT* 109 (1997) 30-43 (1,2,4 collective, 3 Isaiah [final form]); Knud Jeppesen, “From ‘You, My Servant’ to ‘the Hand of the Lord is with My Servants.’ A Discussion of Is 40-66,” *SJOT* 1 (1990) 118-125 (1,4 collective; 2,3 individual); Peter Wilcox and David Paton-Williams, “The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah,” *JSTOT* 42 (1988) 79-102 (1-2 collective, 3-4 Isaiah). Michael Goulder has recently revived the proposal of Sellin that the Servant is the Davidic king Jehoiachin (“Behold My Servant Jehoiachin,” *VT* 52 [2002] 175-190). For a royal messianic interpretation of the Servant Songs, see North, *Suffering Servant* 207-219; Helmer Ringgren, *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1956) 39-53; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 47-50; Payne, “Mission in Isaiah” 9; Oswalt, “Structure” 153-155; and John H. Walton, “The Imagery of the Substitute King Ritual in Isaiah’s Fourth Servant Song,” *JBL* 122 (2003) 734-743. In addition, Antti Laato has recently argued for both collective and messianic dimensions within the Songs (*Servant* 78-245; see esp. 219-245).

¹¹⁹ On the enigmatic character of the Servant Songs, see Westermann, *Isaiah* 40-66 93.

reflect a fundamental lack of religious interest in the other nations” is without foundation. The Hebrew Scriptures reveal a fundamental, widespread and intense interest in gentiles and their conversion to the God of Israel. The relationship of the God of Israel to the nations is an especially prominent theme within the book of Isaiah. This theme is introduced by the book’s opening oracle (Isa 2:2-5), which envisions a future conversion of the nations. Isaiah 2:2-5 reflects the expectation, widespread in the Hebrew Scriptures, of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations, in which Yahweh will establish his universal kingdom, revealing himself as the one true God and drawing people of all nations to Zion. In Isaiah, as in the Psalms and other prophetic books, the conversion of the gentiles is a future expectation, envisioned within the context of a coming reign of God over the nations. This expectation does not involve the concept of present day converts or missionary activity on the part of Israel in behalf of the nations. In Isaiah 56:1-8, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, present day converts do not involve a mission of Israel to the gentiles but are understood as anticipating the ingathering of the nations in the time of Yahweh’s eschatological reign. Nowhere in the Old Testament is the nation of Israel explicitly entrusted with a mission for the nations or commanded to seek gentile converts.

Interest in Isaiah in the destiny of the nations is most prominent of all in Isaiah 40-55. Although some interpreters have argued that these chapters foresee only the submission and defeat of the gentiles, concern for the conversion of the nations is clearly evident in such passages as Isaiah 55:5, 51:4-5, and 45:18-25, where the gentiles are invited to turn from idols to the true God and be saved in the time of Yahweh’s imminent reign. This focus in Isaiah 40-55 on God’s activity for the nations reaches a stunning climax in the Servant Songs. The Servant passages employ language and imagery associated with the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, and, within the final redactional shaping of Isaiah, echo the vision of the nations gathering to Zion in the book’s programmatic opening oracle (2:2-5), to portray the coming of salvation to all peoples through the Servant. In the first two Servant Songs (42:1-9; 49:1-6), the Servant is commissioned as a “light to the nations” and thus entrusted with a mission to the gentiles in the time of Yahweh’s impending eschatological reign. In the culminating Servant Song (52:13-53:12), the Servant brings light to Israel and the nations through his redemptive suffering in their

behalf, and is in turn highly exalted by God. This concept of mission for the nations is not present anywhere else in the Old Testament, but is unique to the Servant Songs. However, the identity of this figure is not explicit in Isaiah.

We have seen that in the Hebrew Scriptures the nation of Israel is nowhere entrusted with a mission to gentiles in the present. Yet we have also seen in the Hebrew Scriptures an intense expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the gentiles, linked with an interest in present day conversions as signs of this future ingathering of the nations. Did this understanding of gentiles and their conversion inform Jewish proselytism in the second temple period? To what degree were Jewish understandings of gentiles formed by the Scriptures, especially the book of Isaiah? And what role, if any, was played by the Servant Songs of Isaiah, which, as we have seen, contain the unique expression in the Old Testament of a mission for the gentiles? Each of these questions can only be answered through an examination of second temple Jewish sources concerning proselytism and conversion. As we will see, the variety of ways in which the Servant passages in Isaiah were understood in second temple Judaism would both reflect, and at the same time, help to create and nurture, very different understandings of Israel and its role among the nations.

CHAPTER THREE

CONVERSION OF GENTILES AND INTERPRETATION OF ISAIAH IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

3.1 *Introduction*

We have seen that the Hebrew Scriptures reveal a widespread interest in gentiles and their conversion, and that the book of Isaiah exhibits a more pronounced interest in conversion of gentiles than any other book of the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet in Isaiah, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, the conversion of gentiles does not involve a missionary task for Israel, but rather involves an expectation of God's future ingathering of the nations to Zion. The evidence in Isaiah, as well as elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, for interest in the conversion of gentiles, places before us the question of the extent to which such attitudes were embraced by Jewish communities in Palestine and in the diaspora in the period of the second temple. What attitudes existed in second temple Judaism regarding gentiles and their conversion? This raises the further question of the way in which exegesis of Isaiah and other scriptures was related to understandings of mission and conversion in second temple Judaism. It is widely held that there was little or no connection between Jewish proselytism in antiquity and exegesis of the Scriptures.¹ Is this assessment accurate? To what extent were Jewish attitudes toward gentiles in the second temple period related to the Old Testament, especially the book of Isaiah?

In chapter one we examined the evidence for conversion of gentiles and Jewish missionary activity in the second temple period. In this chapter we will examine Jewish documents for the evidence they provide for the understandings and attitudes which underlay Jewish approaches to gentiles and their conversion. Do Jewish documents of the second temple period reveal, as claimed by some, a vivid consciousness of mission to gentiles, or rather, as claimed by

¹ So e.g. Axenfeld, *Propaganda* 46-47; Cohen, "Conversion" 33-35, 41-42.

others, an utter lack of evidence for interest in gentile conversion?² This chapter, like the previous two, will therefore necessarily be wide-ranging, for our purpose will be to understand the key conceptions which undergird Jewish attitudes toward gentiles in antiquity. Anyone familiar with the debate over Jewish mission will recognize that the texts we will examine in this chapter (LXX Isaiah, *Targum Isaiah*, *Sibylline Oracles* book 3, Wisdom of Solomon, *Parables of Enoch*, Philo, Romans 2:17-29, and *Testament of Levi*) include the texts and passages of Jewish literature which have played the most prominent role in this debate, and which have been held most strongly to support the existence of a Jewish consciousness of mission to gentiles in antiquity. Yet as this chapter will also show, these very diverse texts, upon close examination, reveal surprising links to one another, and to interpretation of Scripture, especially of the book of Isaiah. Understanding these connections, as we will see, is crucial for illuminating the understanding of gentiles and their conversion which these documents express. The sequence in which these texts are discussed in this chapter will follow a general chronological order.³ We begin with Septuagint Isaiah.

3.2 LXX Isaiah

Although it is still frequently neglected, increasing attention has in recent years been given to the Septuagint as a source of knowledge regarding Jewish exegesis and theology in the second temple period.⁴ The Old Greek version of Isaiah has proven to be of special

² For the wide spectrum of views in the debate over Jewish mission, see pages 23-27 above.

³ Anything more than a general chronological sequence is not possible, given the frequent uncertainty regarding the dating of these texts, the traditions which inform them, and earlier texts which in some cases underlie them. The one exception to this chronological sequence will be *Targum Isaiah*, which will be discussed in conjunction with LXX Isaiah.

⁴ See the articles collected in *Theologische Probleme der Septuaginta und der hellenistischen Hermeneutik* (ed. Henning Graf Reventlow; Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1997) 9-132; the treatments in the "Symposium on Exegesis in the LXX," *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. Claude E. Cox; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987) 79-232; the relevant papers in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Oslo, 1998* (SBLSCS 51; ed. Bernard A. Taylor; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001); the relevant articles in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls* (FS Emanuel Tov; eds. Paul M. Shalom et al.; Boston:

interest in this regard, because of the extraordinary freedom with which the translator of Isaiah rendered the Hebrew text before him. Recent studies suggest that the divergences of Greek Isaiah, a text of Egyptian provenance, from its *Vorlage* are frequently informed by the translator's theology, and often reflect a particular interpretation of the passages involved.⁵ At those points where the views of the

Brill, 2003); and the select bibliography in Emmanuel Tov, "Die Septuaginta in ihrem theologischen und traditionsgehistorischen Verhältnis zur hebräischen Bibel," *Mitte der Schrift?* (ed. M. Klopfenstein, et al.; Bern: Lang, 1987) 266-68; cf. Arie van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah 23 as Version and Vision* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); J. Lust, "Messianism in the Greek Version of Jeremiah," *VII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. Claude E. Cox; Atlanta: Scholars, 1991) 87-122; Paul E. Dion, "The Greek Version of Deut 21:1-9 and Its Variants: A Record of Early Exegesis," *De Septuaginta* (eds. A. Pietersma and Claude Cox; Mississauga, Ontario: Benben, 1984) 151-60; Robert Hanhart, "Die Übersetzungstechnik der Septuaginta als Interpretation: Daniel 11,29 und die Ägyptenzüge des Antiochus Epiphanes," *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy* (eds. P. Cassetti, et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 135-57. See also Karen H. Jobes and Moises Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000) 86-102, 206-236, 288-307. For earlier studies, see I.L. Seeligmann, "Problems and Perspectives in Modern Septuagint Research," *Textus* 15 (1990) 220-232 [originally published 1940]; Leo Priejs, *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta* (Leiden: Brill, 1948); George Bertram, "Praeparatio Evangelica in der Septuaginta," *VT* 7 (1957) 225-49; idem, "Zur Bedeutung der Septuaginta in der Geschichte des Diasporajudentums," *Klio* 21 (1926-27) 444-446; and H.M. Ervin, *Theological Aspects of the Septuagint of the Book of Psalms* (Ph.D. Dissertation; Princeton Theological Seminary, 1962).

⁵ Among the more important of the studies which investigate Septuagint Isaiah as an important witness to ancient Jewish exegesis are Ronald L. Troxel, "Exegesis and Theology in the LXX: Isaiah V 26-30," *VT* 43 (1993) 102-111; idem, "Isaiah 7,14-16 through the eyes of the Septuagint," *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 79 (2003) 1-22; Arie van der Kooij, "Zur Theologie des Jesajabuches in der Septuaginta," *Theologische Probleme der Septuaginta und der hellenistischen Hermeneutik* (ed. Henning Graf Reventlow; Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1997) 9-25; idem, "The Septuagint of Isaiah: Translation and Interpretation," *The Book of Isaiah* (BETL 81; ed. J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Leuven University, 1989) 127-33; idem, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 33-65; idem, "Die Septuaginta Jesajas als Dokument jüdischer Exegese: Einige Notizen zu LXX-Jes. 7," *Übersetzung und Deutung* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1977) 91-102; David A. Baer, *When We All Go Home: Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56-66* (JSOTSS 318; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); Jean Koenig, *L'herméneutique analogique du Judaïsme antique d'après les témoins textuels d'Israël* (Leiden: Brill, 1982); John W. Olley, "Righteousness" in the *Septuagint of Isaiah: A Contextual Study* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979); and the pioneering work of I.L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of Its Problems* (Leiden: Brill, 1948) 3, 48-103, 120-121. While Seeligmann believed that the exegesis of the translator was generally atomistic and to be sought only in isolated free renderings (*Isaiah* 41), van der Kooij, Koenig, Baer and Troxel have argued persuasively that these free renderings often can be shown to cohere with one another and to reflect a particular interpretation of whole pericopes. Of

translator may be discerned, Septuagint Isaiah thus offers a direct, if narrow, passage into the world and thought of the translator, and thus concrete evidence for at least one way in which passages within the book of Isaiah were interpreted by Jews living in Egypt in the middle to late second century B.C.E.⁶ The interpretive tendencies of LXX Isaiah may frequently be highlighted by a comparison with the full scroll of Isaiah from Qumran (*IQIsa-a*). This text, which was also composed in the middle to late second century B.C.E., seems to reflect a similarly free and interpretive approach to its *Vorlage*, in contrast to the fragmentary *IQIsa-b*, which dates about a century later and reflects a more conservative approach to its base text.⁷

The exegetical traditions reflected in LXX Isaiah also possess a peculiar importance because of the inspired and authoritative character which many Jews ascribed to the Old Greek translation.⁸

course, as Emmanuel Tov has cautioned, it cannot be assumed that every apparent variation of the LXX from the MT reflects the translator's theology; one must also consider the possibility of variants in the translator's *Vorlage*, of misunderstanding of the Hebrew text on the part of the translator, and of contextual or narrow (as opposed to theological) exegesis ("Verhältnis" 242-44, 250-63; cf. idem, "Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?" *De Septuaginta* [Mississauga, Ontario: Benben, 1984] 53-70; Peter Flint, "The Septuagint Version of Isaiah 23:1-14 and the Massoretic Text," *BIOSCS* 21 [1988] 35-54; Troxel, "Exegesis" 102-104).

⁶ Seeligmann assigned the translation, or at least one stratum of it, to c. 140 B.C.E. (*Isaiah* 86-91). Van der Kooij, on different grounds, arrives at the same approximate date (*Textzeugen* 71-73). Martin Hengel, however, doubts that the most important prophetic book would be translated so late, and suggests a reworking of an older translation ("Die Septuaginta als 'christliche Schriftensammlung', ihre Vorgeschichte und das Problem ihres Kanons," *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum* [WUNT 72; eds. Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1994] 245-46). The fundamental unity of the final translation was argued persuasively by J. Ziegler (*Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias* [Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen 12.3; Münster: Aschendorfschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934] 31-36, followed by Seeligmann (*Isaiah* 38-42) and van der Kooij (*Textzeugen* 31-32), and is assumed here. However, the value of the evidence which the Greek version of Isaiah provides does not turn upon this question.

⁷ Cf. A. van der Kooij, "The Old Greek of Isaiah in Relation to the Qumran Texts of Isaiah," *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (SBLSCSS 33; eds. P.J. Brooke and B. Lindars; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) 195-213; Emmanuel Tov, "The Text of Isaiah at Qumran," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 2. 491-511; and Paulson Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts at Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll IQIsa-a* (JSPSup 34; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

⁸ On the authority of the Old Greek version for diaspora Jews such as Philo, cf. *De Vita Mosis* 2.34-40; see Sydney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford:

LXX Isaiah thus not only reflects, but no doubt also formatively influenced Jewish exegesis and theology within Egypt and the wider Greek-speaking diaspora. The Greek translation of Isaiah thus offers a promising place to begin our inquiry into attitudes toward conversion of gentiles, and the relationship of these attitudes to the exegesis of Isaiah, in Judaism of the Graeco-Roman period.⁹

3.2.1 *Conversion of Gentiles in Greek Isaiah*

What evidence does LXX Isaiah provide for the attitudes of the translator toward conversion of gentiles? As Seeligmann pointed out, in view of the exceptional freedom shown generally in LXX Isaiah, literal renderings can be equally significant as divergences in disclosing the mind of the translator.¹⁰ It is therefore significant that, in passages in Isaiah which we have noted reveal a clear interest in conversion of gentiles (2:2-5; 11:9-10; 45:18-25; 56:1-8; cf. 14:1-2; 19:18-25; 25:6-9; 37:20; 60:1-16, 66:19-24), the translator consistently provides a rendering which follows the Hebrew text closely.¹¹ This would tend to indicate that the translator found such passages congenial.

Clarendon, 1968) 353. The καίγε or "proto-Theodotionic" recension of the Old Greek isolated by D. Barthélemy (*Les devanciers d'Aquila* [SVT 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963]), which is represented in Isaiah by Theodotion Isaiah, is dated by Barthélemy to the first half of the first century C.E., but to the first half of the first century B.C.E. by Jellicoe (*Septuagint* 143), and to the close of the first century B.C.E. by van der Kooij (*Textzeugen* 155). This recension shows that some Jews regarded revision of the LXX to be necessary, and that the Old Greek was not the only form of text available to Greek-speaking Jews. On the variety of attitudes in ancient Judaism toward the authority of the LXX and the possibility of its revision, see Sebastian Brock, "To Revise Or Not To Revise: Attitudes to Jewish Biblical Translation," *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (SBL.SCSS 33; eds. P.J. Brooke and B. Lindars; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) 301-338.

⁹ The fullest discussion of the treatment of the nations in LXX Isaiah is Robert Peter Van de Kappelle, *Evidence of a Jewish Proselytizing Tendency in the Old Greek (Septuagint) Version of the Book of Isaiah* (Ph.D. Dissertation; Princeton Theological Seminary, 1977); briefer treatments may be found in Baer, *Home* 199-276; Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 115-118; and Olley, *Righteousness* 147-51.

¹⁰ Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 95; cf. Stanley E. Porter and Brook W.R. Pearson, "Isaiah Through Greek Eyes: The Septuagint of Isaiah," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 2.542-545.

¹¹ An examination of each of these passages in LXX Isaiah is beyond the scope of this study. In many of them, such as 2:1-5, 25:6-9, 56:1-8, 60:1-16, and 37:20, the translation follows the thought of the original very closely. On 2:1-5, cf. Henri Cazelles, "Texte Massoretique et Septante en Is 2,1-5," *Mélanges Dominique*

More direct evidence for the translator's interest in conversion of gentiles is provided by those passages in Isaiah 40-55 in which reference to gentile conversion is less explicit, in the demonstrable inclination of the LXX translator to opt in such cases for an interpretation of the passage which understands it in terms of conversion. In *Isaiah* 51:4-5, for example, where the words נָאֵל זְרָעִי יִתְלַו ("and for my arm they [i.e. the peoples] will wait expectantly" [51:5]) might be taken to refer either to an act of judgement or deliverance for the gentiles, the translator of Isaiah interpreted these words as a clear reference to the salvation of the nations: καὶ εἰς τὸν βραχίονά μου ἐλπιοῦσιν.¹² His understanding of the salvific import of the passage also apparently led him, in the immediately preceding clause, to transform the very different thought there וְזְרָעִי עֲמִים יִשְׁפְּטוּ ("and my arms will judge the peoples") into an almost identical expression (καὶ

Barthélemy (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 51-59 (although there is little evidence for his claim that the translation actually accentuates the universalism of the original). The close rendering of 25:6-9 contrasts sharply with *Targum Isaiah*, which interprets 25:6-7 in terms of the destruction of the nations, and 25:8-9 of the salvation of Israel alone. On 56:1-8, cf. Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 117 and Olley, *Righteousness* 149. On 60:1-16, see Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 123-27. In other passages the translator introduces elements which would appear even to heighten the universalistic aspect, e.g. 11:9-10 (cf. Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 132-33), 14:1-2 (cf. Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 117; Olley, *Righteousness* 111, 148), 45:18-25 (cf. Olley, *Righteousness* 56-58; Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 118; Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 140-142), and 66:19-24. The translation of 19:18-25 is more highly interpretive (cf. A. van der Kooij, "The Old Greek of Isaiah 19:16-25: Translation and Interpretation," *VI Congress for the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies* [ed. Claude Cox; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987] 127-66; L. Monsengwo-Pasinya, "Isaïe XIX 16-25 et universalisme dans la LXX," *Congress Volume Salamanca 1983* [ed. J.A. Emerton; Leiden: Brill, 1985] 192-207; Bertram, "Praeparatio" 227; Prijs, *Tradition* 70-71; Baer, *Home* 214-217). Particularly noteworthy is 19:25, where Egypt and Assyria, the recipients of divine blessing in MT and IQIsa-a ("Blessed be my people Egypt, and Assyria the work of my hands, and my inheritance Israel"), are in LXX Isaiah apparently reinterpreted as the Jewish diaspora in Egypt and among Assyrians (ἐυλογημένους ὁ λαὸς μου ὁ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ὁ ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις καὶ ἡ κληρονομία μου Ἰσραὴλ). This interpretation of the Hebrew *Vorlage* probably does not reflect a lesser interest in conversion (*contra* Bertram, "Praeparatio" 227), but the desire to avoid any connotations of syncretism.

¹² IQIsa-a reads זְרָעִי ("his arm"), an interpretation apparently associating Isa 51:4-5 with the activity of an eschatological messianic figure (so John V. Chamberlain, "The Functions of God as Messianic Titles in the Complete Qumran Isaiah Scroll," *VT* 5 [1955] 366-67; Koenig, *Hermeneutique* 372; A. Rubinstein, "The Theological Aspect of Some Variant Readings in the Isaiah Scroll," *JJS* 6 [1955] 200) or perhaps the person of Cyrus (so van der Kooij, *Textzeugen* 90-92).

εἰς τὸν βραχίονά μου ἔθνη ἐλπιοῦσιν).¹³ Similarly in 11:10, the reference to gentile conversion present in the Hebrew text (“the nations shall seek [שׁוּ] him”), which is obliterated in *Targum Isaiah* (“to him shall the kingdom be obedient”), is strengthened in LXX Isaiah: ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἔθνη ἐλπιοῦσιν (“in him gentiles will put their hope”).

Isaiah 55:5 is interpreted in the *Isaiah Targum* solely of the political subjection of the nations to Israel:

Behold, people that you know not shall serve you, and people that knew you not shall *run to offer tribute* to you, for the sake of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.¹⁴

That the Greek translator of Isaiah understood the passage very differently is shown by his rendering of אָלֶיךָ יָרוּצוּ (“to you they shall run”). The phrase, which is translated “they shall run to offer tribute to you” in *Targum Isaiah*, is rendered by the Greek translator ἐπὶ σὲ καταφεύξονται. The word καταφεύγω, a term used for fleeing to the Lord for his mercy and protection (cf. LXX Esther 4:17k; Psalm 142:9), was apparently also familiar to diaspora Jews as a traditional term for conversion of gentiles.¹⁵ The words יָרוּצוּ אָלֶיךָ, which the targumist of Isaiah took as a reference to the payment of tribute by the nations to Israel, were thus understood by the Greek translator of Isaiah as a prediction of the conversion

¹³ Cf. Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 131-132. IQIsa-a reads “his arms” (זרועו) in line with the apparently messianic understanding of the passage in the large Isaiah scroll (see n. 12 above).

¹⁴ הא עם דלא תדע יפלחונך ועם דלא ידעוך ירהטון לאסקא לך מסין בדיל יוי אלהך ולקדישא דישראל ארי שבחך The English translation is from Bruce D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum* (Wilmington, Delaware: Glazier, 1987) 107.

¹⁵ The translator of Zechariah apparently assumed his readers’ knowledge of this usage, when he translated the prophet’s prediction וְנָלְּוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל יְהוָה (“And many gentiles will *join themselves* to the Lord in that day, and will become my people”), with καὶ καταφεύξονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἔσονται αὐτῷ εἰς λαόν (Zech 2:15). The Greek translator of Jeremiah likewise rendered וְנָלְּוּ אֶל יְהוָה (“and they will *join themselves* to the Lord”) (50:5) as καὶ καταφεύξονται πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεόν (27:5=MT 50:5). The same technical sense of the word to refer to conversion appears in *Testament of Simeon* 3.5: ἐάν τις ἐπὶ κύριον καταφύγῃ, ἀποτρέχει τὸ πονηρὸν πνεῦμα ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ. Philo describes the conversion of proselytes as ἡ ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν καταφυγή (Spec. 1.309). Cf. Heb 6:18. The translator of Isaiah, in using this term, was thus apparently employing traditional imagery for gentile conversion. This understanding of the term καταφεύγω in LXX Isaiah 55:5 is confirmed by Isaiah 54:15, discussed below, in which the translator uses the word explicitly of the conversion of proselytes.

of gentiles to God and of their incorporation into Israel.

Other passages provide further evidence of the translator's interest in gentile conversion. He interpreted *Isaiah 41:25*, a passage describing the commission and activity of Cyrus, as a promise that people from the north and from the west would be called by God's name (ἐγὼ δὲ ἡγεῖρα τὸν ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ τὸν ἀφ' ἡλίου ἀνατολῶν, κληθήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί μου).¹⁶ Elsewhere he understood the prophet to address gentiles directly and call for their conversion. In *Isaiah 41:1* he rendered the words אֵימָנוּ אֶל־יְהוָה ("Be silent before me, coastlands"), apparently reading ט instead of ר and assuming the verbal root שׁדח, as ἐγκαινίζεσθε πρὸς με, νῆσοι, and thus as a divine invitation to conversion on the part of gentiles: "Consecrate yourselves to me, O islands!"¹⁷ Through a similar exchange of consonants he interpreted the phrase מַעֲשֵׂי צִירִיךָ ("makers of idols") in *Isaiah 45:16b* as repeating the identical invitation: ἐγκαινίζεσθε πρὸς με, νῆσοι.

The conversion which the LXX translator envisioned for gentiles involved their abandonment of idolatry and whole-hearted devotion to Yahweh, the God of Israel.¹⁸ The LXX translator's concern for gentile conversion is thus not inconsistent with the evidence elsewhere in the translation for pejorative attitudes toward gentiles and their polytheistic worship.¹⁹ This interest was also accompanied by an

¹⁶ Cf. Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 117; Olley, *Righteousness* 148.

¹⁷ Cf. Olley, *Righteousness* 149-150. Other instances in which the translator apparently read ט for ר are found at 8:9, 8:20, 29:3, 42:21, and 44:28. Such instances may simply reflect misreadings or, as van der Kooij argues, the translator's conscious interpretation of the text through an ancient exegetical device (*Textzeugen* 67).

¹⁸ This is clear from such passages as 46:5-11, a disputation addressed in his *Vorlage* to Israel (cf. Schoors, *God Your Saviour* 273-78), but which the translator apparently interpreted as addressed to gentiles (cf. 46:5 τίς με ὡμοιώσατε; ἴδετε, τεχνάσασθε, οἱ πλανώμενοι "To whom did you compare me? Behold, skill-fully craft [your images], you erring ones"), whom in 46:8 he understood as called upon to repent of their idolatry: μνήσθητε ταῦτα καὶ στενάξατε, μετανοήσατε, οἱ πεπλανημένοι, ἐπιστρέψατε τῇ καρδίᾳ ("Remember these things and groan, repent, you erring ones, be converted in heart"). Cf. 31:6-7, where the Greek translator's deletion of the phrase "sons of Israel" (present in MT and IQIsa-a) and his shift from the second to third person, suggest deliberate interpretation of the passage as a call to gentiles for conversion from idolatry: ἐπιστρέφητε, οἱ τὴν βαθεῖαν βουλὴν βουλευόμενοι καὶ ἄνομον, ὅτι τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἀπαρνήσονται οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὰ χειροποίητα αὐτῶν τὰ ἀργυρᾶ καὶ τὰ χρυσᾶ, ἃ ἐποίησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐτῶν.

¹⁹ For the evidence, see Baer, *Home* 199-230.

understanding according inferior status to gentile converts in relation to native Jews within the redeemed community.²⁰

3.2.2 *The Servant in Greek Isaiah*

The clear interest of the Greek translator of Isaiah in gentile conversion leads to the question how he might have understood the Servant Songs of Isaiah, in which the Servant is described as a “light to the nations” (42:6, 49:6).²¹ The Servant is announced but not named in the Hebrew text of *Isaiah* 42:1 (הַן עַבְדִּי אֲתָמָּד בּוֹ) יְהוָה יְחַיֵּה נַפְשִׁי בְּחַיֵּי רַחֲמֵי רַחֲמֵי [“Behold, my Servant, I will uphold him, my chosen one, my soul is well pleased with him”]). The Greek translator of Isaiah, however, through the insertion of *Ιακωβ* and *Ισραηλ* into the translation (*Ιακωβ* ὁ παῖς μου, ἀντιλήμψομαι αὐτοῦ, *Ισραηλ* ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου, προσεδέξατο αὐτὸν ἢ ψυχὴ μου), reveals a collective interpretation of the Servant figure in 42:1-9 as a designation for the people of Israel.²² In the second Servant Song, the Servant, speaking in the first person, is by the Greek translator made to say συναχθήσομαι καὶ δοξασθήσομαι ἐναντίον κυρίου, καὶ ὁ θεός μου ἔσται μου ἰσχύς (“I will be gathered together and will be glorified before the Lord, and my God will be my strength”) (*Isaiah* 49:5). It is evident from the affirmation of the servant’s future ingathering

²⁰ For the strong evidence for this conception in LXX Isaiah, see Baer’s detailed study of LXX Isaiah 66 (*Home* 231-276). On the status of gentile converts in second temple Judaism, see n. 76 on p. 43 above.

²¹ The isolation of the “Servant Songs” as a distinct collection within Deutero-Isaiah is a modern conception; there is nonetheless, as we will see, abundant evidence for interpreters in antiquity who regarded some or all of these passages as distinct units within the wider context of Isaiah, and interpreted them accordingly; see also below, pp. 111-112, n. 49.

²² That LXX Isaiah 42:1 reflects a corporate interpretation of the servant is widely recognized; cf. Sydney H.T. Page, “The Suffering Servant Between the Testaments,” *NTS* 31 (1985) 486; Pierre Grelot, *Les poèmes du serviteur* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1981) 87-88; E.R. Ekblad Jr., *Isaiah’s Servant Poems According to the Septuagint: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999) 62-64; Haag, *Gottesknecht* 45, 47; Baer, *Home* 219-220; W. Zimmerli, “παῖς θεοῦ,” *TDNT* 5 (1967) 676. N.L. Tidwell argues from metrical considerations that the words יְחַיֵּה נַפְשִׁי were actually present in the Hebrew *Vorlage* used by the LXX translator (“My Servant Jacob, Is. xlii 1: A Suggestion,” *Studies on Prophecy* [SVT 26; ed. D. Lys; Leiden: Brill, 1974] 84-91). However, in view of their absence in all Hebrew manuscripts (including IQIsa-a and IQIsa-b) as well as versions, and the demonstrable freedom of the Greek translator of Isaiah elsewhere, there can be little doubt that these words represent his own insertion into the text at 42:1.

(συναχθήσομαι) that the translator also regarded the Servant figure in the second Servant passage (49:1-6) as a corporate designation for the Jewish nation.²³ This is confirmed by the following words (καὶ δοξασθήσομαι ἐναντίον κυρίου), which recall LXX Isaiah 4:2, where, in a clear departure from the Hebrew, the translator asserts God's future glorification of the remnant of Israel:

τῇ δὲ ἡμερᾷ ἐκείνῃ ἐπιλάμψει ὁ θεὸς ἐν βουλῇ μετὰ δόξης ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τοῦ ὑψῶσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὸ καταλειφθὲν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ

And in that day God will shine in counsel with glory upon the earth, to exalt and glorify the remnant of Israel.

It is this remnant which the translator of Greek Isaiah here identifies with the figure of the Servant.²⁴ This leads to the further question of

²³ Cf. Grelot, *Les poèmes* 91; Seeligman, *Isaiah* 116; Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 154; Arie van der Kooij, "Zur Theologie des Jesajabuches in der Septuaginta," in *Theologische Probleme der Septuaginta und der hellenistischen Hermeneutik* (ed. Henning Graf Reventlow; Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1997) 20-21. However, van der Kooij has more recently argued that LXX Isaiah identifies the Servant figure, not with the remnant of Israel as a whole, but with the priestly group of Onias in Egypt; see "The Servant of the Lord: A Particular Group of Jews in Egypt according to the Old Greek of Isaiah," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (FS W.A.M. Beuken; eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 383-396. This view is possible. However, two considerations make this view perhaps less likely. First, the LXX translator did not construe the designation "Israel" in 49:3 as a predicate nominative in apposition with "servant," and thus symbolically as an honorary title of the Servant (which an identification of the Servant with a particular individual or group within Israel would seem to require), but clearly as a vocative identifying the nation with the Servant (δοῦλός μου εἶ σύ, Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἐν σοὶ δοξασθήσομαι ["You are my Servant, O Israel, and in you I will be glorified"]). Second, συναχθήσομαι in 49:5 takes up the verb συναγαγεῖν earlier in the verse, which refers to the ingathering of Jacob and Israel (τοῦ συναγαγεῖν τὸν Ἰακώβ καὶ Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς αὐτόν, 49:5). The two verbs presumably refer to the same event, and thus it is apparently the nation as a whole who speaks in the συναχθήσομαι of 49:5. Nor is it necessary to assume that the translator identifies the Servant in 49:5 only with the diaspora, for when the dispersed are brought back (49:6), the whole nation may be said to be gathered together (49:5). However, in favor of van der Kooij's thesis one may compare LXX Isa 11:16, where "the remnant of my people in Egypt" and "Israel" are apparently identified (cf. van der Kooij, "Servant" 393-394). In any case, LXX Isa 49:5 reflects a collective interpretation of the second Servant Song.

²⁴ Discussion of the LXX translator's treatment of the final Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13-53:12) is beyond the scope of this study. The variety of interpretations that have been proposed reflect the fact that the translation does not clearly reveal a definite understanding of the identity of the Servant in 52:13-53:12. That the LXX translator adopted a collective understanding of the Servant in 52:13-53:12

how he conceived the Servant Israel to be related to the gentiles. In what sense did the translator of Greek Isaiah understand Israel to be a light to the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν, 42:6; 49:6)?

In the first Servant Song, *Isaiah* 42:4c declares of the Servant that “in his teaching the coastlands will put their hope” (וְלִתְּוֹכָתוֹ (אֵיִם יִנְחִילוּ). The very different reading of the large Isaiah scroll from Qumran (וְלִתְּוֹרֵתוֹ אֵיִם יִנְחִילוּ), which most likely means “and in accordance with his instructions the coastlands will cause (Israel) to possess (its land),” appears to reflect a conscious interpretation of the passage which excluded any suggestion of gentile conversion.²⁵ In its focus only on the subjugation of the nations and apparently complete lack of interest in a future conversion of the gentiles, the ideology of IQIsa-a parallels what we know of attitudes toward gentiles and their conversion in the Qumran community.²⁶ The translator of Greek Isaiah, by contrast, interpreted the clause in terms of the Servant as a basis of hope for the gentiles: καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ νόμῳ [or ὀνόματι] αὐτοῦ ἔθνη ἐλπιουσιν.²⁷ Likewise in 49:8, where the expression

was argued by G. Dalman, *Der leidende und der sterbende Messias der Synagoge im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend* (Berlin: Reuther, 1888) 32, and more recently by Grelot, *Les poèmes* 98-111. An individual, messianic interpretation is suggested by Page, “Suffering Servant” 486; Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 155-68; Zimmerli, “παῖς θεοῦ” 676-77; H. Hegermann, *Jesaja 53 in Hexapla, Targum und Peschitta* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1954) 128-30; R. Frank Johnson, “Christ the Servant of the Lord,” *The Old and New Testaments* (eds. James H. Charlesworth and Walter P. Weaver; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1993) 124; Ekblad, *Servant Poems* 167-266, 272-275, 281-282; and Hans Walter Wolff, *Jesaja 53 im Urchristentum* (3rd ed.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1952) 40-42. According to K. Euler, *Die Verkündigung vom leidenden Gottesknecht aus Jes. 53 in der griechischen Bibel* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1934) and Haag, *Gottesknecht* 46-47, the LXX translator understood the Servant in Isaiah 53 to be the prophet Isaiah himself.

²⁵ While J. Lindblom regarded יִנְחִילוּ as a mere scribal error and senseless (“Die Ebed Jahwe Orakel in der neuentdeckten Jesajahandschrift (DSIa),” *ZAW* 63 [1951] 237), Koenig (*L’herméneutique* 355-69) has argued convincingly that the reading reflects a deliberate reinterpretation of the clause, in light of Isaiah 49:8 (לְהַנְחִיל) and 60:9, as referring to the role of the gentiles in the return of the exiles to Palestine. The reading לִתְּוֹרֵתוֹ also suggests this reinterpretation; since at Qumran תּוֹרָה in the singular would normally connote the law of Moses (cf. Lindblom, “Ebed Jahweh Orakel” 236-37), the change to the plural was apparently introduced to reflect an interpretation of the phrase as referring, not to the law, but to God’s instructions to the gentiles to bring the exiles home.

²⁶ Cf. 1QM 12:9-15; 19:2-8; 4QpIsa-a 7:25; 1QSa 1:21; and see Schiffman, “Non-Jews” 166-168.

²⁷ While all extant texts and versions support ὀνόματι, this is most likely a very ancient inner-Greek corruption for an original νόμῳ, rendering תּוֹרָתוֹ. The

עַם בְּרִית might be taken in the singular sense as a reference to Israel, or in a plural sense with reference to the gentile nations, the Septuagint translator's rendering of the phrase (διαθήκην ἐθνῶν, "covenant with the gentiles") clearly reveals his understanding of Servant Israel as the means whereby a covenant is effected with the gentiles.

The interest in conversion of gentiles which we have documented elsewhere in LXX Isaiah (51:4-5, 11:10, 55:5, 41:25, 41:1) thus may be seen to correspond to the translator's understanding of Israel's role as the Servant. For the translator of Greek Isaiah, the Jewish nation is a light to the nations in virtue of its role in the conversion of the gentiles to the God of Israel. This might seem necessarily to involve the conception of a mission of Israel to the gentiles, and is often taken as evidence of active proselytizing of gentiles by Jews in Egypt. Biblical scholarship has frequently portrayed LXX Isaiah, and indeed the entire Septuagint, as dominated by a missionary purpose.²⁸ However, we must look more closely at the nature of the Servant's role in the mind of the translator.

How did the translator of LXX Isaiah understand Israel would carry out its role as the Isaianic Servant? This becomes clear in his rendering of the description of the Servant's activity in Isaiah 49:5-6:

And now thus says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his Servant, to gather together Jacob and Israel to him (I will be gathered together and will be glorified before the Lord, and my God will be my strength). And he said to me, "It is a great thing for you that you are called my Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and bring back the dispersion of Israel; behold, I have appointed you as a light to the nations, that you may be salvation to the end of the earth."

Whereas the imagery of the MT implies that in the new Exodus the Servant will turn the remnant of Israel back to God (49:5-6a), LXX Isaiah, in rendering לְשׁוּבָב ("turn") in 49:5 by συναγαγεῖν ("gather together") and נְצִיחִי ("remnant") in 49:6a by τὴν διασποράν ("dispersion"), presents a more monochromatic portrait focusing exclusively on the regathering of Israel from exile.²⁹ Moreover, whereas in MT the Servant's activity on behalf of Israel and his activity on behalf of

reading ὄνοματι is otherwise inexplicable; the translator of LXX Isaiah nowhere else renders תּוֹרָה by ὄνομα.

²⁸ See for example Schoeps, *Paul* 28-29; Blauw, *Missionary Nature* 58-60.

²⁹ Cf. van der Kooij, "Servant" 388-390.

the gentiles are sharply distinguished, in LXX Isaiah the gathering of the dispersed of Israel and the conversion of the gentiles are closely associated or identified. In MT the Servant's activity for Israel (49:6a) is a "trifling" thing in comparison with his mission to the gentiles (49:6b). By contrast, in LXX Isaiah the regathering of Israel (49:6a) is a "great" thing, and Israel's activity as a "light for the nations" is closely connected with this event (49:6b).³⁰ The association of the conversion of gentiles with the eschatological ingathering of Israel, already present, as we saw in chapter two, in Hebrew Isaiah, is thus reflected and even intensified in LXX Isaiah.

The conception underlying this association would seem to be the expectation of a pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in the time of Israel's eschatological restoration (cf. LXX Isa 2:2-5; 56:3-8; 60:1-16). Elsewhere the translator clearly reveals his expectation of a conversion of gentiles in the messianic era (cf. 11:10, ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν).³¹ This expectation also appears to underlie the depiction of gentile conversion in LXX Isaiah 54:15. In this passage the translator apparently identified the verb גור ("attack") used in his *Vorlage* with its more common homonym גור ("sojourn"), and on the basis of this interpretation produced a free rendering of the remainder of the verse, revealing his intense interest in gentile conversion: ἰδοὺ προσήλυτοι προσελεύσονται σοι δι' ἐμοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ σὲ καταφεύξονται ("Behold, proselytes shall come to you through me and to you they shall come for refuge").³² The use of the conversion term καταφεύγω in parallelism with προσέρχομαι shows that προσήλυτος already here carries the same technical religious sense of "gentile convert" which we have seen the word has in Philo (*Spec. leg.* 1.51; cf. *Quaest. Ex.* 2.2) and in the New Testament (Acts 2:11; 6:5; 13:43).³³ The passage reveals not only an interest in gentile conversion on the part of the translator, but also some of his conceptions as to how this would come about. The centripetal and theocentric conception of gentile

³⁰ Cf. Grelot, *Les poèmes* 91-92; Ekblad, *Servant Poems* 109, 280.

³¹ See the discussion of LXX Isa 11:9-10 above, p. 99.

³² See for further discussion Gelston, "Universalism" 386; Lindars, "Tidings" 494; Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 117-118; Olley, *Righteousness* 148; Van de Kappelle, *Proselytizing* 118-120.

³³ See pp. 36-37 (n. 49) above. W.C. Allen argued that the word is uniformly used throughout the LXX in this technical sense ("On the Meaning of προσήλυτος in the LXX," *Exp* [Oct 1894] 264-75); more reservedly Lake, *Acts* 82-84; Bertholet, *Stellung* 259-61.

conversion associated with the pilgrimage of the nations in Hebrew Isaiah and the rest of the Old Testament, is clearly reflected here. The actors in the passage are not Israel, but gentiles, who come to Israel (προσελεύσονται σοι) and join themselves to the nation (ἐπὶ σὲ καταφεύξονται). Their conversion is the work, not of Israel, but of God (δι' ἐμοῦ). The juxtaposition προσήλυτοι προσελεύσονται indicates that, as was Philo, the author of LXX Isaiah was aware of the derivation of προσήλυτος from προσέρχομαι, and thus associated a centripetal notion of conversion with the very term.³⁴ This and the other terms used for gentile conversion in LXX Isaiah (ἐπιστρέφομαι 19:22; 45:22; προσκείμαι 56:3; 56:6; προστίθεμαι 14:1) show clearly that in the translator's mind the nations will gather to Israel of their own accord through God's activity.

The Septuagint translator thus envisioned Israel as fulfilling the Servant's role as a light for the nations, not through the accession of proselytes in his own day, but rather through the ingathering of the gentiles, drawn by God's activity, in the coming time of Israel's restoration.³⁵ The conversion of gentiles in LXX Isaiah, as in Hebrew Isaiah, is an eschatological event. The translator's interest in gentile conversion thus apparently did not involve any conception of a command or mission to engage in active efforts to convert the nations. To the contrary, the translator's thought reflects the centripetal

³⁴ Cf. Philo's explanation of the word: τούτους δὲ καλεῖ προσηλύτους ἀπὸ τοῦ προσεληλυθέναι καινῇ καὶ φιλοθέῳ πολιτείᾳ (*Spec.* 1.51). Paula Fredriksen has argued that the eschatological pilgrimage tradition within Judaism envisions the spiritual and moral conversion of the gentiles, but never their becoming proselytes through circumcision ("Judaism" 223-225). While this may be true of the pilgrimage texts within the Hebrew Bible and many other texts, here in LXX Isaiah, as in Philo (cf. *Mos.* 2.43-44), these gentiles are clearly envisioned as becoming proselytes.

³⁵ As A. van der Kooij has shown, many prophecies in Isaiah are given an actualizing interpretation by the translator (*Textzeugen* 33-65; "Dokument" 91-102; cf. idem, "Isaiah in the Septuagint," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* [eds. C.C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997] 2.513-529); the author of LXX Isaiah regards a number of prophetic passages within Isaiah as already fulfilled through the sojourn of the Jewish community in Egypt (e.g. LXX Isa 10:24; 19:18-19; see van der Kooij, "Servant" 390-394). However, that the translator did not treat all prophecies as fulfilled has been conclusively demonstrated by Troxel ("Exegesis" 109-111). In particular, the regathering of Israel, contemplated in LXX Isa 49:5-6, which will include the ingathering of "the remnant of my people in Egypt" (LXX Isa 11:16), is clearly awaited by the LXX translator as a future event (cf. LXX Isa 11:11-16; 4:2; and see van der Kooij, "Servant" 388-390, 394; Baer, *Home* 219-220).

and theocentric concept of conversion found in Hebrew Isaiah and generally in the Old Testament, according to which God will in the eschatological era cause gentiles to attach themselves to Israel of their own accord (cf. LXX Isaiah 54:15; 55:5; 41:25; 51:5). Thus Septuagint Isaiah offers no evidence for active proselytizing or a Jewish mission, but does provide clear evidence for a fervent interest in conversion of gentiles in the coming time of Israel's ingathering.

The intense expectation of a future conversion of the nations which we saw in Hebrew Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament, is thus also clearly present in Septuagint Isaiah. The translator of LXX Isaiah reveals his interest in gentile conversion and in a mediatorial role of Israel for the nations in the eschatological era above all through his interpretation of the Isaiah Servant passages. This interpretation most likely reflects an already established exegetical tradition, and the authority of the LXX in the eyes of many Jews must have added to the influence of these traditions. However, as we have already observed in the case of IQIsa-a, this was not the only way in which these passages were understood in ancient Judaism. To what extent may one trace the interest in and understanding of gentiles and their conversion, present in Hebrew Isaiah and reflected also in LXX Isaiah, elsewhere in second temple Judaism, and what is the evidence for divergent traditions? We turn next to the Isaiah Targum.

3.3 Targum Isaiah

Further evidence for attitudes toward gentiles in second temple Judaism, and the relationship of these attitudes to scriptural exegesis, is perhaps provided by the *Targum of Isaiah*.³⁶ The use of *Targum Isaiah* as evidence for the second temple period is extremely problematic, however, for the targum in its written form dates to the second century at the very earliest, and much more probably to the fifth

³⁶ The standard critical editions are A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic. Volume III: The Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: Brill, 1962) and J.F. Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1949). Corrections to Sperber's edition are available in J. Zijl, "Errata in Sperber's Edition of Targum Isaiah," *ASTI* 4 (1965) 189-91; idem, "A Second List of Errata in Sperber's Edition of Targum Jonathan," *ASTI* 7 (1970) 132-34.

century or beyond.³⁷ Despite the late date of the codification of the work in its final form, many of the exegetical traditions within the Targum reflect a much earlier period.³⁸ Yet while it is certain that some of the interpretations advanced by the *Targum of Isaiah* derive from interpretations in vogue in Palestine prior to 70 C.E., there is, apart from independent confirmation by second temple sources, no way of securely determining whether this is so in any particular case. The evidence of *Targum Isaiah* must therefore be used with great care.

We already noted in our discussion of Septuagint Isaiah several passages in *Targum Isaiah* which present a striking contrast to the interest in conversion of gentiles reflected in LXX Isaiah.³⁹ This suggests the question: how are the Servant Songs, which are associated with conversion of gentiles in LXX Isaiah, understood in the Isaiah Targum? In Isaiah 42:1-9, in contrast to the collective interpretation of the first Servant Song in LXX Isaiah, the Targum interprets the passage of an individual, apparently messianic, figure.⁴⁰ However, the mission of this messianic figure is not to the

³⁷ The standard view assigns the targum approximately to the fifth century C.E. (e.g. Stenning, *Targum of Isaiah ix-x*), and posits a long history of formation from the Tannaitic (Palestinaian) through the Amoraic (Babylonian) periods (cf. P. Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets* [New Haven: Yale, 1927]; B.D. Chilton, *The Glory of Israel. The Theology and Provenience of the Isaiah Targum* [JSOTS 23; Sheffield: JSOT, 1982]); a far later date is proposed for the work in its final form by S.H. Levey, "The Date of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets," *VT* 21 (1971) 186-96. Van der Kooij by contrast believes he can date the composition of the work precisely to 132 C.E., and assigns to it a strictly Palestinian provenance (*Textzeugen* 182-213). There is, however, no absolutely certain evidence for targumic activity prior to the third century C.E.; see Steven D. Fraade, "Rabbinic Views of the Practice of Targum, and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third-Sixth Centuries," *Studies in the Galilee of Late Antiquity* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1991) 253-86.

³⁸ For example, Jostein Ådna dates chapter 53 of the targum (which will be discussed below) to a period just prior to the Bar Kochba revolt in 132-135 C.E. ("Der Gottesknecht als triumphierender und interzessorischer Messias," *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte* [eds. B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996] 133-136); Bruce Chilton similarly assigns this passage to the period between 70 and 132 C.E. ("Two in One: Renderings of the Book of Isaiah in Targum Jonathan," *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition* [eds. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997] 555). The possibility that this passage enshrines pre-70 C.E. interpretive traditions is very great (see further below).

³⁹ See above, pages 98 (n. 11), 99.

⁴⁰ Cf. P. Seidelin, "Der Ebed Yahwe und die Messiasgestalt in Jesajatargum,"

gentiles but to Israel, in particular the diaspora. His role is to instruct Israel in the law, accomplish victory over the gentiles, and return the Jews of the diaspora to their land (see esp. *Targ Isa* 42:7). The Targum interprets the Servant's role as a "light to the nations" (*Isa* 42:6) in terms of the traditional identification of light with the law, understanding "blind" of *Isaiah* 42:7 as "blind to the law" (*Targ Isa* 42:7; cf. *Targ Isa* 35:5). However, in contrast to LXX *Isaiah*, the Targum does not understand this illumination as extending to the gentiles, but solely to Israel: the Messiah's task is "to open the eyes of the house of Israel who are as blind to the law" (*Targ Isa* 42:7), not the eyes of the gentiles.⁴¹

It is usually assumed that the Servant in *Isaiah* 49:1-6 is in the Targum, as in LXX *Isaiah*, interpreted collectively of Israel.⁴² However, it is more likely that the Targum identifies the Servant here with the prophet *Isaiah* himself, in company with the other prophets of Israel.⁴³ The interpretation is similar to that of the third Song (*Isa* 50:4-11), which in *Targum Isaiah* is clearly interpreted of *Isaiah* and, in a wider sense, all the prophets.⁴⁴ It is the prophet *Isaiah* who is thus described in the Targum as a "light to the nations" (*Targ Isa* 49:6), but he is not understood as sent to them in any sense. The task of the prophet (who is the subject of *Targ Isa* 49:1-5, 6b, 7b, and 8b), a task in which the other prophets are included as well (*Targ Isa* 49:6a; cf. 50:4, 50:10), is rather to bring about the repentance of Israel (*Targ Isa* 49:2, 49:5) and thus prepare the people of Israel (the subject of *Targ Isa* 49:7a and 49:8a) for the messianic age (*Targ Isa* 49:6-9). This age will be characterized by victory over the gentiles and return of

ŽAW 35 (1936) 197; B.D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes* (Wilmington, Delaware: Glazier, 1987) 81; Haag, *Gottesknecht* 36 (n. 4). The explanatory gloss קשיחא appears in 42:1 in many manuscripts of the targum.

⁴¹ As Grelot observes, the exegesis of the Targum "accentue le nationalisme religieux du texte au point d'atténuer à l'extrême le rôle de 'Lumière des nations' départi au Serviteur (v. 6d)" (*Les poèmes* 205); cf. Seidelin, "Messiasgestalt" 199-200.

⁴² So Seidelin, "Messiasgestalt" 202; Grelot, *Les poèmes* 199, 206-209; Chilton, *Isaiah Targum* 97; Jeremias, "παῖς θεοῦ" 684-85; Bosch, *Heidenmission* 39.

⁴³ Cf. Ruprecht, *Auslegungsgeschichte* 15-18; Haag, *Gottesknecht* 36 (n. 4). The interpretive additions מימרי ("my word" [*Targ Isa* 49:1]) and פתנימוי ("his words" [*Targ Isa* 49:2]) point clearly to a prophetic identity of this figure in the Targum, who through the alternation of third person plural (*Targ Isa* 49:7a) and second person singular (*Targ Isa* 49:7b) pronouns, is apparently distinguished from Israel in *Targum Isaiah* 49:7.

⁴⁴ Cf. Seidelin, "Messiasgestalt" 202-206; Grelot, *Les poèmes* 210-13.

the exiles (*Targ Isa* 49:6-17). The apparent lack of interest in gentile conversion in the Isaiah Targum corresponds to the attitude toward gentiles we discovered in IQIsa-a and at Qumran generally.⁴⁵

Targum Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is well-known for its messianic interpretation of the fourth Servant Song.⁴⁶ However, surprisingly in light of the unmistakable accent in the Song on the Servant's sufferings, this messianic interpretation of the Servant did not involve any conception that the messiah was to suffer. The messiah is instead depicted as a glorious victor, and the numerous references to suffering in Isaiah 52:13-53:12 are either applied to the condition of Israel before the advent of the messiah (*Targ Isa* 52:14, 53:3-4, 53:5a, 53:8, 53:10, 53:11a), applied to the conquered nations (*Targ Isa* 53:3, 53:7, 53:8, 53:9), or transformed into glory (*Targ Isa* 53:2, 53:5b, 53:7, 53:8, 53:9,

⁴⁵ See above, p. 103.

⁴⁶ This is universally recognized; the explanatory gloss משיח appears in *Targ Isa* 52:13 and 53:10. This is noteworthy, because there is no unambiguous evidence elsewhere in any second temple document for a messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53, or the conception of a suffering messiah. D. Barthélemy and W.H. Brownlee argued that the reading of IQIsa-a in 52:14 מִשְׁחָתִי "I have anointed" for MT מִשְׁחָתִי "disfigured") represented a messianic interpretation of the fourth Song within the Qumran community ("Le grand rouleau d'Isaïe trouvé près de la Mer Morte," *RB* 57 [1950] 546-49; "The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls," *BASOR* 132 [1953] 8-15); but for a different explanation of the variant, see A. Rubinstein, "Isaiah LII 14—מִשְׁחָתִי—and the DSIa Variant," *Bib* 35 (1954) 475-79. George J. Brooke has also argued that the two principal fragments of 4QLevi-d provide evidence for an interpretation of Isa 53 identifying the Servant with a suffering messianic high priest figure ("4QTestament of Levi-d and the Messianic Servant High Priest," *From Jesus to John* [JSNTS 84; FS M. de Jonge; ed. M.C. De Boer; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993] 83-100), but the allusions claimed by Brooke are tenuous at best, and his arguments have not been followed. The claim is sometimes made that in the *Dialogue with Trypho* (mid-second century C.E.) the remarks of Justin's Jewish debating partner reveal that he understood Isaiah 53 as a prophecy of a suffering messiah (see Schoeps, *Paul* 135; Mark L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts* [JSNTSS 110; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 244). However, this view is founded upon an egregious misreading of the dialogue. The dialogue does, to be sure, portray Trypho as agreeing in the course of the discussion that the fourth Song does indeed describe a suffering messiah, but this is an admission that the dialogue portrays Trypho as making in response to Justin's arguments (*Dial.* 32-33, 36, 39, 49, 89). Cf. Christoph Marksches, "Der Mensch Jesus Christus im Angesicht Gottes: Zwei Modelle des Verständnisses von Jesaja 52,13-53,12 in der patristischen Literatur und deren Entwicklung," *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996) 216-219. In the beginning of the dialogue Trypho specifically rejects the idea of a suffering messiah (*Dial.* 32). Justin describes other Jewish teachers as making the same admission as Trypho (*Dial.* 68.7-9), but again clearly in the context of response to Christian arguments (ἀναγκαζόμενοι, 68.9).

53:12b).⁴⁷ The work of the messiah is not in behalf of the nations but of Israel; he is to accomplish victory over the nations and return of the exiles (*Targ Isa* 53:8, 53:11), to rebuild the temple (*Targ Isa* 53:5), to teach Israel (*Targ Isa* 53:5), to bring about the repentance of the disobedient in Israel (*Targ Isa* 53:12; cf. 53:4, 53:6), and to intercede for their forgiveness (*Targ Isa* 53:4, 53:5, 53:6, 53:7, 53:11, 53:12).⁴⁸

Thus, in contrast to LXX Isaiah, *Targum Isaiah* identifies the Servant of the first and fourth Songs, not with the nation of Israel, but with the messiah.⁴⁹ However, *Targum Isaiah* excludes any conception

⁴⁷ That no trace of suffering is ascribed to the Messiah in the interpretation of *Targum Isaiah* 52:13-53:12 is widely recognized; cf. Chilton, *Isaiah Targum* 103, 105; Page, "Suffering Servant" 487-88; Grelot, *Les poèmes* 213-20; Ådna, "Gottesknecht" 142-143; Martin Rese, "Überprüfung einiger Thesen von Joachim Jeremias zum Thema des Gottesknechtes im Judentum," *ZTK* 60 (1963) 36-37; Seidelin, "Messiasgestalt" 209-17; Fascher, *Jesaja* 53 16-18; Wolff, *Jesaja* 53 52; Dalman, *Messias* 47-49. The attempt of Roger Syren to find in *Targum Isaiah* 53 a notion of vicarious suffering on the part of the Messiah ("Targum Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and Christian Interpretation," *JJS* 40 [1989] 211-212) is unconvincing. Jeremias' well-known hypothesis that the Targum text originally described a suffering messiah, but that the references to suffering were subsequently removed due to anti-Christian polemic ("παῖς θεοῦ" 686-700; cf. Hegermann, *Jesaja* 53 118-22; Page, "Suffering Servant" 488) is also supported by no firm evidence. Page offers the rather curious argument that a messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 *must* have involved the belief that the messiah would suffer, because the Hebrew text speaks unmistakably of the Servant's sufferings ("Suffering Servant" 488; cf. the similar argument in K. Koch, "Messias und Sündenvergebung in Jesaja 53—Targum," *JSS* 3 [1972] 148). But of course *Targum Isaiah* 52:13-53:12 proves precisely the opposite—that a messianic interpretation of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 need not, and in the case of *Targum Isaiah* did not, involve any conception of a suffering messiah.

⁴⁸ The tasks entrusted to the messiah here all appear to have been traditionally associated with the messiah in ancient Judaism (cf. the description of the messianic age in *Targ Isa* 49:6-9, 42:7, and see *Psalms of Solomon* 17), with the exception of the intercessory prayer of the messiah for Israel's forgiveness (cf. esp. *Targ Isa* 53:4, 53:7, 53:11), which is not attested elsewhere (cf. Syren, "Targum Isaiah 52:13-53:12" 211; Grelot, *Les poèmes* 219-20). This probably reflects narrow or contextual (as opposed to theological) exegesis of the references to vicarious expiation within the passage (e.g. 53:4-5; 53:7-8; 53:10-12). For the distinction between contextual and theological exegesis, see n. 5 on pp. 95-96 above.

⁴⁹ The meturgeman's identification of the Servant with the messiah in the first and fourth Songs, and with the prophet Isaiah in the second Song, in contrast with his usual identification in Isa 40-55 of Yahweh's Servant with the nation of Israel (cf. *Targ Isa* 41:8, 41:9, 42:19, 44:1-2, 44:21, 45:4, 48:20) shows clearly that he read these passages as distinct poems within their wider context. The evidence of the targum, together with the sources we will examine below, thus suggests that, while the isolation of the Servant Songs as a distinct collection within Isa 40-55 is

of a suffering messiah, and in the Targum the messiah's mission is to open the eyes of Israel, not to bring light to the gentiles. The Targum's reading of the Servant Songs in a way which excludes gentile conversion coheres with the lack of enthusiasm for gentile conversion evident elsewhere in *Targum Isaiah*.⁵⁰ While both LXX Isaiah and *Targum Isaiah* share vivid eschatological hopes, the expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations, so prominent in LXX Isaiah, is present in *Targum Isaiah* in only a muted way.⁵¹ The *Isaiah Targum*, together with the evidence from Qumran and IQIsa-a, clearly reveals that the eager interest in gentile conversion reflected in LXX Isaiah was not shared by all Jews in the second temple period.

3.4 Sibylline Oracles 3.573-600

There is general consensus that the third *Sibylline Oracle* is a Jewish work written in Egypt in the second century B.C.E.; however, 1-96 and 350-488 are usually excepted as later additions.⁵² Verses 573-600 of *Sibylline Oracle* 3 occur in the midst of the larger oracle contained in verses 545-656.⁵³ This larger section begins with a denunciation of the Greeks for idolatry, and prediction of disasters to come (545-572). Following 573-600, the section continues with a prediction of judgement upon all people (601-15) and of the dawn of the messianic era (616-23). This is followed by a direct appeal for conversion to the true God (624-31). The oracle concludes with further prophecies of judgement (632-51) and of the coming of a messianic king (652-56).

a modern conception, ancient interpreters could and did read these poems or parts of them as discrete contexts within the wider context of Isa 40-55.

⁵⁰ Cf. the discussion above, pages 98 (n. 11), 99.

⁵¹ The expectation is, nevertheless, not entirely absent; see *Targ Isa* 2:1-5, and cf. Chilton, *Isaiah Targum* xvii. The evidence does not suggest the absence of the expectation, but rather a definite lack of interest and enthusiasm for the prospect. Similarly in the eschatology of *Jubilees*, the expectation of a future conversion of the gentiles, while not expressly rejected, is conspicuous by its absence (cf. *Jub.* 1:4-29; 23:14-31).

⁵² See John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism* (SBLDS 13; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974) 21-34, and G.W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishna* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981) 162-65. All citations are from the edition of Johannes Geffcken, *Die Oracula Sibyllina* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).

⁵³ On the structure of the third Sibyl, see Collins, *Sibylline Oracles* 35-39.

Sibylline Oracles 3.573-600 is a eulogistic description of the Jewish nation. This passage serves several functions within the larger unit 545-656. The passage functions on the one hand as the positive counterpart to the preceding denunciation of the Greeks (545-72), which demonstrates the superiority of the Jews, their God and their way of life. Again in counterpoint to the preceding section, which condemns the Greeks as the source of idolatry (545-72), the passage 573-600 identifies the Jewish nation as the source of the knowledge of God and of his ways for all humankind. The passage also serves a hortatory function for its Jewish readership, and to flesh out the appeal for conversion in 624-31, by presenting the worship and life of faithful Jews as examples of piety and godly conduct. In fulfilling these aims, the author of the third Sibyl also reveals in 573-600 his own self-understanding as a Jew of the Egyptian diaspora.

The author begins his eulogy of the Jews in 573-600 by describing them as a holy nation of pious men:

εὐσεβέων ἀνδρῶν ἱερὸν γένος ἔσσειται αὐτίς
βουλαῖς ἡδὲ νόφ προσκείμενοι Ὑψίστοιο (573-574)

There will be thereafter a holy nation of pious men
adhering to the counsels and law of the Most High.

From the preceding prophecy of the accomplishment of all things on the “fated day” in 562-72, followed in 573 by the term αὐτίς (“thereafter”) and the future tense verb ἔσσειται, it is evident that here in 573-574 these designations refer specifically to the Jewish nation in the eschatological time of promise.⁵⁴ The Jews are here depicted as a holy nation of righteous men (εὐσεβέων ἀνδρῶν ἱερὸν γένος [573]).⁵⁵ The eschatological nation is also described elsewhere in the third Sibyl as “sons of the great God” (υἱοὶ...μεγάλοιο θεοῦ [702]). The gentiles by contrast are described in the denunciatory section which precedes 573-600 as a “nation of impious men” (ἀσεβῶν γένος . . . ἀνδρῶν, 568; cf. χαλεπῶν γένος ἀνδρῶν, 761). That these motifs reflect a traditional Jewish self-understanding is evident from their frequent occurrence also in the fourth and fifth Sibylline books and elsewhere in Jewish literature of the second temple period.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ On the eschatological setting of the passage cf. Collins, *Athens* 149; Dalbert, *Missionsliteratur* 121.

⁵⁵ Cf. 219 γένος ἐστὶ δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων.

⁵⁶ In the fourth Sibyl the Jews are designated a “guiltless race of pious men”

The description of eschatological Israel as a holy nation of the righteous is amplified in 582-83:

αὐτοὶ δ' ὑψωθέντες ὑπ' ἀθανάτοιο προφῆται
καὶ μέγα χάρμα βροτοῖς πάντεσσι φέροντες

And they themselves exalted by the Immortal One as prophets and bringing great joy to all mortals.

The Jews are here described as a nation of prophets (προφῆται) for all mankind (βροτοῖς πάντεσσι). In 195 the Jewish community is similarly described as a guide to all people (οἱ πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι βίου καθοδηγοὶ ἔσονται). These passages are frequently taken as evidence for a consciousness of mission among Jews in the second temple period to bring the light of the law to gentiles.⁵⁷ However, this interpretation reflects a gross misreading of the text. For, like the designations in 573-74, the descriptions of the Jewish nation as prophets and guides for all humanity in both 582-83 and 195 are applied solely to the eschatological community. This is apparent in 582-83 from the author's use of future tense verbs in 575 (περικυδανέουσιν) and 581 (οἰκήσουσι), in continuation of the future tense ἔσσεται in 573, which as we have seen refers to the eschatological future envisioned in 562-572. Likewise in 195 the role of

(εὐσεβέων...φῶλον ἀναίτιον) (4.136). The Jews are described in the fifth Sibyl as θεῖον γένος οὐράνιον τε (5.249), θειογενής (5.261), λαὸς δίκαιος (5.154, 5.226), ἔθνος ἀληθές (5.149), ἄγιοι πιστοὶ καὶ λαὸς ἀληθής (5.161), θεοῦ τέκνα (5.202), and δίκαιοι (5.270; 5.283, 5.357, 5.426). The gentiles are described in contrasting terms: φῶλον ἀναιδές (5.359), κακοὶ (5.75, 5.271, 5.509); cf. 4.40 (δύσπιστον γὰρ ἅπαν μερόπων γένος). See Dalbert, *Missionsliteratur* 116-17, and Marcel Simon, "Sur quelques aspects des Oracles Sibyllins juifs," *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (ed. David Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1983) 231. For these motifs elsewhere in Jewish literature, cf. Wis 10:15 λαὸς ὁσῖος καὶ σπέρμα ἁμεμπτον; *Ps Sol* 8.23 οἱ ὅσιοι τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς ἀρνία ἐν ἀκακία ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν [τῶν ἔθνων], 17:15 οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς διαθήκης ἐν μέσῳ ἔθνων συμμίκτων, 17.26 λαὸς ἅγιος, 17.27 υἱοὶ θεοῦ, 9.8 ἡμεῖς λαὸς ὃν ἡγάπησας; 4 *Ezra* 6.58 *Nos autem populus tuus, quem vocasti primogenitum, unigenitum, aemulatorem, carissimum*; 3 *Mac* 6.28 οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐπουρανίου θεοῦ ζῶντος; *Test Levi* 18.13 τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ; cf. *Ps Sol* 13.8, 18.4. Cf. also the description of the Jewish nation as a σπέρμα δίκαιον in the insertion of ms *e* in *Test Levi* 2.3 (line 16); this insertion represents the translation of an earlier Aramaic "Prayer of Levi" related to the Qumran fragment belonging to the scroll 4Q 213 *TestLevi-α* (see J.T. Milik, "Le Testament de Lévi en Araméen. Fragment de la grotte 4 de Qumran," *RB* 62 [1955] 398-406; de Jonge/Hollander, *Commentary* 17-18).

⁵⁷ See e.g. Carleton Paget, "Jewish Proselytism" 84; Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* 60; Jeremias, *Promise* 12.

the Jewish nation as “guides to the conduct of life for all mortals” coincides with the advent of a messianic king whose “seventh reign” apparently ushers in the eschaton (192-93).⁵⁸ The role of Israel described in 194-195 is therefore also understood by the author to take place in the eschatological era.

However, while the nation’s exaltation to this prophetic status is an eschatological event, it is nevertheless the consequence (γάρ [584]) of the pre-eschatological nation’s faithful adherence to the true knowledge of God and his ways (584-85):

μούνους γάρ σφιν δῶκε θεὸς μέγας εὐφρονα βουλήν
καὶ πίστιν καὶ ἄριστον ἐνὶ στήθεσσι νόημα

For to them alone the great God gave right counsel
and faithfulness and perfect understanding in their hearts

These lines, and those that follow (586-600), describe faithful Jews in the pre-eschatological time and their God-given understanding of the divine counsels.⁵⁹ They reveal this understanding through their exclusive worship of the one God (586-94a) and obedience to the commands of his holy law (594b-600). Lines 584-600 thus identify the faithful remnant of the nation, who hold fast to the worship of God and his laws, as the heirs of the eschatological promises described in lines 573-583.⁶⁰ In contrast to the Greeks who have led humanity astray through their idols (545-72), the righteous remnant of the Jewish nation, because of their faithful service of the one God, will in the messianic era have a prophetic office extending to all humanity.

The ethical monotheism which formed the content of the descrip-

⁵⁸ A. Momigliano has argued that this king is not an eschatological figure and that verses 194-195 refer to the time of the Maccabees (“La Portata Storica dei Vaticini sul Settimo Re nel Terzo Libro degli Oracoli Sibillini,” *Forma Futuri* [Torino: Bottega d’Erasmus, 1975] 1077-84); against him, Collins has shown persuasively that the seventh king is to be identified with the “king from the sun” (652) with whom the messianic age is associated in *Sib. Or. 3* (*Athens* 64-71; cf. Schürer/Vermes/Millar, *History* 3.1.635).

⁵⁹ The change in 584 from the eschatological people of God to the pre-eschatological nation is signalled by the causative γάρ (584), and the switch from the future tense verbs employed in 573-583, to aorist (584) and present (590, 591, 593, 595, 596) tense verbs in 584-600.

⁶⁰ For this theme in Wisdom and elsewhere in Jewish thought of the second temple period, see page 120 below.

tion of the piety of faithful Jews in 584-600 likewise forms the content of the following conversion appeal in 624-31:

But you, devious mortal, do not be slow or delay, but turn back and propitiate God. Sacrifice to God hundreds of bulls and of first-born lambs and of goats as the seasons turn. Yes, appease him, the immortal God, if perchance he will be merciful. For it is he alone who is God; there is no other. Honor righteousness also and oppress no one, for these things the Immortal One commands to wretched mortals.

The function of this and similar (cf. 762-66) appeals within the wider framework of the third Sibyl is a critical question. It is often supposed that these function as appeals to the gentile reader for conversion, and indicate that the work was composed as propaganda for a gentile audience.⁶¹ In this case the prophecies of divine judgement and eschatological intervention in history (545-72, 601-23, 632-56) would serve within the context of the larger oracle primarily as motivations for the call to conversion (624-31; 762-66).⁶²

This view is difficult to maintain, however, for as is repeatedly stressed throughout the book, the author expects the conversion of gentiles only at the advent of the eschatological era (cf. 570; 601-623; 702-61; 767-808).⁶³ This is also the period, as we have seen, in which the author expects the Jewish nation to become the prophets (582-83) and guides (194-95) of all humanity. Reflecting the eschatological pilgrimage tradition which pervades the Hebrew Scriptures, the third Sibylline Oracle envisions the messianic era as a time when the nations, following their conversion as a result of God's decisive intervention (601-23; 702-14), will flock to the temple at Jerusalem (715-723; 767-775) and look to the Jewish nation for instruction in the worship of the true God (718-23 [cf. 194-95]; 772-86 [cf. 582-83]). It is noteworthy that the appeals in 624-31 and 762-66 are imme-

⁶¹ Cf. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 12-13; Bertholet, *Stellung* 266-68; Axenfeld, *Propaganda* 32; Aalen, *Licht* 218-19; Kasting, *Anfänge* 18; James Yeong-Sik Pak, *Paul as Missionary: A Comparative Study of Missionary Discourse in Paul's Letters and Selected Contemporary Jewish Texts* (EUS 410; Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1991) 14.

⁶² So Mark J. Goodwin, *Paul, Apostle of the Living God: Kerygma and Conversion in 2 Corinthians* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2001) 27-28, 98-99; Pak, *Paul as Missionary* 72-75; Simon, "aspects des Oracles" 220; Schürer/Vermes/Millar, *History* 3.1.628; Axenfeld, *Propaganda* 32.

⁶³ Rightly Riesner, "Jewish Mission" 241-242; Fredriksen, "Judaism" 222.

diately preceded by predictions of this eschatological conversion.⁶⁴ This would suggest that the invitations to conversion in 624-31 and 762-66 (cf. *Frag* 1.25b-32a) do not function in *Sibylline Oracle* 3 as actual appeals to gentile readers, but rather, like the call to conversion in Hebrew Isaiah 45:22-23, as anticipations of the day, which the author regarded as imminent, when the nations would stream to Jerusalem, the light of the knowledge of God would come to the gentiles, and the righteous nation of the Jews would become the prophets and guides of the world. In the third Sibylline Oracle, as in LXX Isaiah, we do not find a consciousness of mission for the gentiles, but an eager expectation of the conversion of gentiles at the imminent coming of God's eschatological reign.

3.5 *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:12-5:13, 17:2-18:4

The *Wisdom of Solomon* was composed in Greek anywhere from around 120 B.C.E. to around 45 C.E.⁶⁵ The widespread assumption that the work was composed at least partly for gentiles in order to promote their conversion has little evidence to support it.⁶⁶ The book, as its dense scriptural allusions and its description of the Exodus generation as "our fathers" (12:6; 18:6; cf. 16:8, 18:8) would indicate, was apparently addressed to a Jewish audience.⁶⁷

Study of the *Wisdom of Solomon* has greatly benefitted from recent increased attention to the literary characteristics of the work. This research has demonstrated the elaborate literary structure of *Wisdom*, which the author achieves by such devices as inclusion,

⁶⁴ 601-623 preceding 624-31; 702-761 preceding 762-766. Cf. also 767-808, which immediately follows the latter appeal.

⁶⁵ The work is dated to the last decades of the second century B.C.E. by Armin Schmitt (*Das Buch der Weisheit: Ein Kommentar* [Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1986] 8); to shortly after 28 B.C.E. by J.M. Reese (*The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* [Wilmington, Delaware: Glazier, 1983] 16-17); and to the reign of Caligula by David Winston (*The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979] 20-25) and Collins (*Athens* 182). On the whole a date earlier rather than later within this range seems most probable.

⁶⁶ For the work as missionary literature addressed to gentiles, cf. Dalbert, *Missionsliteratur* 72-73; Conzelmann, *Gentiles/Jews/Christians* 174-75, 178; Bertholet, *Stellung* 273-74; similarly, in essentials, David Volgger, "Die Adressaten des Weisheitsbuches," *Biblica* 82 (2001) 153-177.

⁶⁷ For further evidence that the work is addressed to Jews, cf. Schmitt, *Weisheit* 19-21; Reese, *Wisdom* 15-16.

parallelism, and concentric structuring.⁶⁸ There is now general agreement on literary grounds that the work is composed of three main divisions, 1:1-6:21, 6:22-10:21, and 11:1-19:22.⁶⁹ Attention to the literary features of the work has also been of great value in clarifying the movement of thought within these individual sections, to the first of which we now turn.

3.5.1 *Wis* 2:12-5:13

In a ground-breaking study, J.M. Reese demonstrated the concentric structure of the first division of the work, 1:1-6:21.⁷⁰ The section is framed by two parallel exhortations to the acquisition of wisdom (1:1-15, 6:1-21).⁷¹ Following the introductory exhortation is a speech of the wicked (ἄσεβεις 1:16) in which they reveal their inner thoughts and intentions (1:16-2:24).⁷² An introduction (1:16-2:1a) and conclusion (2:21-24) bracket the direct speech in 2:1b-2:20.⁷³ The monologue of the impious itself is divided further into three units. In 2:1-5 the wicked reflect upon the ephemeral nature of life; in 2:6-11 they announce their consequent (οὖν 2:6) intention to exploit the creation and afflict the defenseless; and in 2:12-20 they announce their decision to test the righteous man by putting him to a shameful death.⁷⁴

The entire unit 1:16-2:24 corresponds, within the concentric struc-

⁶⁸ Cf. M. Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. M.E. Stone; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 301-306. For a survey of recent literary studies of the work, see Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6: A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation* (AnBib 127; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991) 11-28.

⁶⁹ Cf. Winston, *Wisdom* 9-12.

⁷⁰ J.M. Reese, "Plan and Structure in the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 27 (1965) 391-99.

⁷¹ Each of these units is delimited by an inclusio (1:1, 1:15 δικαιοσύνη; 6:1, 6:21 βασιλεῖς, βασιλεύσητε). See Reese, "Plan" 394-95.

⁷² The unit is delimited by the inclusion of τῆς ἐκείνου μέριδος in 1:16 and τῆς ἐκείνου μέριδος ὄντες in 2:24. See Reese "Plan" 394.

⁷³ The direct speech (2:1b-20) is itself demarcated by an inclusion: λογισάμενοι οὐκ ὀρθῶς (2:1a) and ταῦτα ἐλογίσαντο, καὶ ἐπλανήθησαν (2:21a). Cf. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity* 39.

⁷⁴ Inclusions bracket both 2:1-5 (τελευτή 2:1, 2:5) and 2:6-11 (χρησώμεθα 2:6, ἄχρηστον 2:11). See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity* 40-41. On the content of the monologue, see V. D'Alario, "La réflexion sur le sens de la vie en Sg 1-5. Une réponse aux questions de Job et de Qohélet," *Treasures of Wisdom: Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom* (eds. N. Calduch-Benages and J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Peeters, 1999) 313-329.

ture of 1:1-6:21, to 5:1-23, which presents a second monologue of the wicked, in which at the eschatological vindication of the righteous the impious mourn their oppression of the righteous man and unwillingness to heed him. As with the prior monologue, the actual direct speech (5:4-13) is framed by an introduction (5:1-3) and conclusion (5:14-23).⁷⁵ This direct speech (5:4-13), as the previous one (2:1-20), consists of three discrete sections (5:4-5, 5:6-7, 5:8-13), which, as F. Perrenchio showed, parallel the three divisions of the earlier speech in a chiasmic structure (5:4-5 = 2:12-20, 5:6-7 = 2:6-11, 5:8-13 = 2:1-5).⁷⁶ The wicked express successively amazement at the unexpected salvation of the persecuted and martyred just man (5:4-5), admission of their own error and resulting destruction (5:6-7), and recognition of the futility of their lives (5:8-13).

The two speeches of the impious surround the central section (3:1-4:20), in which the author comments upon the futility of the reasoning of the wicked, as expressed in the first monologue, and their erroneous conceptions regarding the fate of the righteous one. As A.G. Wright showed, a series of internal inclusions (ἄφρων 3:2, 3:12; καρπός 3:13, 4:5; τίμιος, ἄτιμος 4:8, 4:19) permit us to further subdivide this section into three units.⁷⁷ The three units take up successively the problems of unjust suffering (3:1-12), childlessness (3:13-4:6) and untimely death (4:7-20). The author declares that the sufferings of the righteous are but the prelude to a glorious immortality (3:1-12). Moreover, the sterility of the virtuous will be converted to immortal fruitfulness in the time of eschatological visitation, whereas the fecundity of the wicked is illusory (3:13-4:6). Finally, the untimely death of the righteous is God's means of protecting him from apostasy, whereas the longevity of the wicked will end only in

⁷⁵ Inclusions frame both the entire section 5:1-23 (στήσεται 5:1, ἀντιστήσεται 5:23) (see Kolarcik, *Ambiguity* 45), and the actual direct speech in 5:4-13 (ἐξοχομεν 5:4, 5:13) (see Paolo Bizzeti, *Il Libro della Sapienza: Struttura e genere letterario* [Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1984] 61).

⁷⁶ F. Perrenchio, "Struttura e analisi letteraria di Sapienza 1.16-2.24 e 5.1-23," *Sales* 43 (1981) 3-43 (see pp. 33-35). He is followed, with modifications, by Bizetti, *Sapienza* 62-63, and by Kolarcik, *Ambiguity* 54-55. The parallel nature of the sub-units is indicated by the parallel vocabulary employed within them (cf. Perrenchio, "Struttura" 33-34; Bizzeti, *Sapienza* 62). As Kolarcik notes, "All of these repetitions between the two units manifest a concerted effort on the part of the author to establish a connection between the two speeches of the impious" (*Ambiguity* 54-55).

⁷⁷ "The Structure of the Book of Wisdom," *Bib* 48 (1967) 165-184. See especially pp. 171-172.

destruction and dishonor (4:7-20). The central section 3:1-4:20 thus fittingly prepares the reader for the eschatological vindication of the righteous and the confession of the impious in 5:1-13.

The figure of the righteous one (ὁ δίκαιος 2:12, 2:18, 5:1) is first introduced in 2:12-20, and reappears in 5:1-13. In 2:13 the righteous one proclaims himself παῖς κυρίου, which the author of Wisdom understood not as “servant” but as “child,” as 2:18 (εἰ γάρ ἐστιν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ) and 2:16d (καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν) attest.⁷⁸ The preceding structural analysis permits us to identify this figure more closely. We have seen how in the concentric structure of 1:1-6:21, the central section (3:1-4:20) functions to expose the futile reasoning of the wicked expressed in the first monologue (2:1-20) and to presage the vindication of the just and confession of the wicked in the second monologue (5:1-13). In the first unit of this central section (3:1-12), the suffering and death ascribed to an individual in 2:12-20 are ascribed to a plurality of individuals, who are described as δικαίων ψυχαί (3:1), οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ’ αὐτῷ (3:9), οἱ πιστοί (3:9), and οἱ ἐκλεκτοί (3:9). The single exception is 3:10, where the singular again occurs (ὁ δίκαιος). This reveals that the author of Wisdom intended the righteous one of 2:12-20 and 5:1-13 as a collective figure representative of all faithful Jews.⁷⁹ In the teaching of Wisdom, it is the faithful remnant of the Jewish nation, who hold fast to the covenant despite persecution, suffering and death, who will be vindicated in the coming time of eschatological restoration.⁸⁰

The individual features of the portrait of the suffering and vindicated child of God in 2:12-5:13 are drawn in large measure from the fourth Servant Song in Septuagint Isaiah. The allusions to LXX

⁷⁸ Cf. Jeremias, “παῖς θεοῦ” 678; Winston, *Wisdom* 120.

⁷⁹ This is also indicated by the author’s alternation, within the chiasmic structure of 2:1-20 and 5:4-13, of υἱὸς θεοῦ (2:18) in the third unit of the first monologue (2:12-20), with ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ (5:5) in the corresponding unit of the second monologue (5:4-5). On the suffering just one of Wisdom as a collective figure, see Gerhard Dellings, “Die Bezeichnung ‘Söhne Gottes’ in der jüdischen Literatur der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit,” *God’s Christ and His People* (eds. Jacob Jervell and Wayne Meeks; Norway: University of Oslo, 1977) 21-23; M. Adinolfi, “Il Messianismo di Sap. 2,12-20,” *Il Messianismo* (Brescia: 1966) 207-10, and A. Sisti, “La figura del giusto perseguitato in Sap. 2,12-20,” *BibOr* 19 (1977) 129-44.

⁸⁰ The theme of the eschatological vindication of righteous Jews and destruction of those who forsake the covenant is ubiquitous in Jewish literature of the second temple period; see e.g. Tobit 14:5-7; 2 Macc 7; *T. Jud.* 25.1-5; *T. Mos.* 10.1-10; Josephus, *Ap.* 2.218. Cf. the discussion of *Sib. Or.* 3.573-600 above (p. 115).

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in Wisdom 2:12-5:13 are so numerous that they can only be briefly indicated here. The following allusions occur in Wisdom 2:12-3:12:

- 1) 2:12 ὁ δίκαιος The servant is called “righteous one” (δίκαιος) in Isaiah 53:11. Cf. also Wisdom 2:18, 3:1, 3:10, 4:7, 4:16, 5:1.
- 2) 2:13 παῖς κυρίου The servant is called ὁ παῖς μου in Isaiah 52:13. As noted above, the author of Wisdom apparently understood the Greek of LXX Isaiah as a reference to God’s child rather than God’s servant (cf. 2:16d, 2:18, 5:1).
- 3) 2:14 βαρὺς ἔστιν ἡμῖν καὶ βλεπόμενος Cf. Isaiah 53:2 καὶ εἶδομεν αὐτόν, καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος.
- 4) 2:16d καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν Cf. Isaiah 52:13 ὁ παῖς μου.
- 5) 2:19-20. Cf. Isaiah 53:7-9.
- 6) 2:21 ταῦτα ἐλογίσαντο καὶ ἐπλανήθησαν Cf. Isaiah 53:4 ἐλογισάμεθα, 53:6 ἐπλανήθημεν.
- 7) 3:2 ἐλογίσθη κάκωσις ἡ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν Cf. Isaiah 53:4 ἐλογισάμεθα αὐτὸν ἐν κακώσει, 53:7 διὰ τὸ κεκακῶσθαι.
- 8) 3:2-3 ἡ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν; ἡ ἀφ’ ἡμῶν πορεία Cf. Isaiah 53:8 αἴρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ.
- 9) 3:9 οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ’ αὐτῷ συνήσουσιν ἀλήθειαν Cf. Isaiah 52:13 συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου, 53:4 πλάσαι τῇ συνέσει.

Moreover, the two latter sections of the central unit (3:13-4:20), which take up the issues of sterility (3:13-4:6) and early death (4:7-20), appear to be an exegetical reflection of the author of Wisdom upon the apparently contradictory passages Isaiah 53:2 (ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῇ διψώση) and 53:10 (ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν ὄψεται σπέρμα μακρόβιον), in light of Isaiah 54:1. The allusions to Isaiah 53:2 and 53:10 are numerous within 3:13-4:20; e.g. ῥίζα (3:15, 4:3), ἐκριζωθήσεται (4:4), σπέρμα (3:16), μακρόβιος (3:17), χρόνους μακροὺς (4:13), and καρπός (3:13, 3:15, 4:5).⁸¹ In Wisdom 3:13-4:20 the author thus explains how it may be said of the suffering just, although childless (ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῇ διψώση, Isaiah 53:2) and cut off by early death, that “your soul shall see a long-lived seed” (ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν ὄψεται σπέρμα μακρόβιον, Isaiah 53:10).

⁸¹ Cf. 3:19 (γενεά), 3:12 (γένεσις) and Isa 53:8 (τὴν γενεὰν αὐτοῦ); cf. also 3:13 (στεῖρα) and Isa 54:1.

Allusions to Isaiah 52:13-53:12 cluster perhaps most frequently in Wisdom 5:1-8:

- 1) 5:1 Cf. Isaiah 52:13, 53:4. See also 4:19 (ἀφώνους), and cf. Isaiah 52:15 (καὶ συνέξουσι βασιλεῖς τὸ στόμα αὐτῶν).
- 2) 5:2 ἐκστήσονται (cf. Isaiah 52:14 ἐκστήσονται), ἰδόντες (cf. Isaiah 52:15 ὄψονται).
- 3) 5:4 τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ ἐλογισάμεθα μανίαν, καὶ τὴν τελευταίαν αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον Cf. Isaiah 53:3 ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον . . . ἡτιμάσθη καὶ οὐκ ἐλογίσθη; Isaiah 53:4 ἡμεῖς ἐλογισάμεθα αὐτόν.
- 4) 5:5 ὁ κληρὸς αὐτοῦ Cf. Isaiah 53:12 αὐτὸς κληρονομήσει; cf. also 52:13.
- 5) 5:6-7 ἐπλανήθημεν ἀπὸ ὁδοῦ ἀληθείας Cf. Isaiah 53:6 ἐπλανήθημεν, ἄνθρωπος τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ ἐπλανήθη.
- 6) 5:8 πλοῦτος Cf. Isaiah 53:9 καὶ δώσω . . . τοὺς πλουσίους ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ The entire unit 5:8-13 appears to be a reflection upon this verse in LXX Isaiah.

While not all of the allusions suggested above are equally certain, their cumulative weight is sufficient to establish that LXX Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a focus of sustained exegetical reflection in Wisdom 2:12-5:13. The author of Wisdom appears to have understood Isaiah 53 as a scene of eschatological vindication, in which the wicked, in amazement and fear, confess their former disdain for a persecuted and martyred righteous man, who now stands before them raised in glory. As we have seen, the suffering but ultimately victorious child of God in Wisdom 2:12-5:13 is a collective figure; the author of Wisdom thus reveals his understanding of the παῖς of the fourth Isaian Servant Song as a collective figure, representative of all righteous Jews.

That Wisdom 2:12-5:13 reflects a corporate interpretation of the fourth Servant Song (LXX Isaiah 52:13-53:12) is generally recognized.⁸² It is less well recognized that, in composing his por-

⁸² This was seen by Joachim Jeremias, "Amnos Tou Theou—Pais Theou," *ZNW* 34 (1935) 118-119 (cf. p. 121: "We possess in Wisdom of Solomon 5 an example of how a diaspora Jew understood Isaiah 53 according to the LXX."), and M.J. Suggs, "Wisdom of Solomon 2.10-5: A Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song," *JBL* 76 (1957) 26-33, and is accepted by most expositors; see for example Winston, *Wisdom* 119-120; Armin Schmitt, "Komposition, Tradition und Zeitgeschichtlicher Hintergrund in Weish 1,16-2,24 und 4,20-5,23," *Text, Methode und Grammatik* (eds.

trait of the righteous child of God in 2:12-5:13, the author of Wisdom also drew upon the first Servant Song (LXX Isaiah 42:1-9). In Wisdom 2:18a (εἰ γάρ ἐστιν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ, ἀντιλήμψεται αὐτοῦ) the author introduces a clear allusion to LXX Isaiah 42:1a (Ἰακωβ ὁ παῖς μου, ἀντιλήμψομαι αὐτοῦ). His use of υἱός reveals that the author evidently understood the παῖς in LXX Isaiah 42:1, as he did in LXX Isaiah 52:13, in the sense of son, not servant. In line with the understanding in LXX Isaiah 42:1 itself of the παῖς as a collective figure representative of all Israel, the author of Wisdom likewise interpreted this figure collectively, as is evident in Wisdom 3:6-9, which contains a striking number of reminiscences of Isaiah 42:1-4:

- 1) 3:6 προσεδέξατο αὐτοῦς Cf. Isaiah 42:1 προσεδέξατο αὐτόν
- 2) 3:7 ἀναλάμψουσιν Cf. Isaiah 42:4 ἀναλάμψει
- 3) 3:8 κρινούσιν ἔθνη Cf. Isaiah 42:1 κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐξοίσει
- 4) 3:9 τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ Cf. Isaiah 42:1 Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου

The cluster of allusions to Isaiah 42:1-4 within Wisdom 3:6-9 reveals that the author of Wisdom interpreted the Servant of the first Song collectively, of the righteous remnant of Israel. Moreover, it is also evident, in view of the eschatological setting of Wisdom 3:6-9, that he interpreted the Isaiah passage specifically of eschatological Israel, and associated it with the resurrection and glorification of the nation which he also saw presaged in LXX Isaiah 52:13-53:12.⁸³

W. Gross, H. Irsigler, T. Seidl; St. Ottilien: EOS, 1991) 411; idem, *Weisheit* 48; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity* 126-27; P.C. Beentjes, "Wisdom of Solomon 3,1-4, 19 and the Book of Isaiah," *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (FS Willem A.M. Beuken; eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 413-420; M. Gilbert, "Wisdom of Solomon and Scripture," *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (ed. Magne Sæbo; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000) 609; L. Ruppert, *Jesus als der leidende Gerechte? Der Weg Jesu im Lichte eines alt- und zwischentestamentlichen Motivs* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1972) 23-24; G.W.E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (HTS 26; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) 62-66; Page, "Suffering Servant" 482.

⁸³ On the setting of Wisdom 3:1-4:20 as a whole within the Jewish national hope of eschatological restoration, and the false dichotomy between a supposed individual eschatology in 3:1-4:20 and general eschatology in 5:1-23 which is sometimes proposed, see Schmitt, "Komposition" 418; Wright, *People of God* 329-330.

3.5.2 *Wis 17:2-18:4*

Wisdom 17:2-18:4 is the fifth in a series of seven antithetical comparisons describing God's deliverance of his people in the Exodus, which together make up part three of the work (11:1-19:22).⁸⁴ Through his use of the literary device of "flashback" in the introduction to part three (11:1-3), the author closely links part three to part one (1:1-6:21).⁸⁵ The fifth unit of part three, 17:2-18:4, which depicts God's use of the plague of darkness to bring judgement upon the Egyptians and bless Israel, is itself demarcated by an unusually strong triple inclusio (σκοτός 17:2, 18:4; ἄνομος, νόμος 17:2, 18:4; κατακλείω, κατάκλειστος 17:2, 18:4).⁸⁶ The closely parallel nature of the opening (17:2) and closing (18:4) verses of the passage is further accentuated by the fact that both 17:2 and 18:4 describe the reason for the plague of darkness upon the Egyptians, and assign the cause as their attempt to enslave the nation of Israel.

The major difference which the author introduces between the closely connected verses 17:2 and 18:4 is the way in which these verses describe the Jewish nation. In 17:2, Israel is described as an ἔθνος ἅγιον, an apparent allusion to LXX Exodus 19:6, where Israel is described as a "royal priesthood" (βασιλειον ιεράτευμα) and a "holy

This eschatological perspective, I would submit, illumines the striking fusion of covenant and universalism in the author's thought which has so perplexed modern scholarship; on this fusion see Randall D. Chesnutt, "Covenant and Cosmos in Wisdom of Solomon 10-19," *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period* (SJSJ 71; eds. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C.R. de Roo; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003) 223-249.

⁸⁴ On the sevenfold structure of part three, cf. Reese, "Plan" 397-99; a slightly different structure is proposed by A.G. Wright, "The Structure of Wisdom 11-19," *CBQ* 27 (1965) 28-34. On the section 17:2-18:4, see José Vílchez, "La luz en el libro de la Sabiduría," *Treasures of Wisdom: Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom* (eds. N. Calduch-Benages and J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Peeters, 1999) 279-280, 285-288; Samuel Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (JSPSS 23; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 68-76.

⁸⁵ Reese, "Plan" 397 (cf. 393). On the extensive use of this technique in Wis 6:22-19:22 to recall passages and themes in previous sections, see J.M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: 1970) 123-140, and idem, *Wisdom* passim. For further discussion of the thematic unity of 1:1-6:21 and 11:1-19:22 within the book, see Michael Kolarcik, "Universalism and Justice in the Wisdom of Solomon," *Treasures of Wisdom: Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom* (eds. N. Calduch-Benages and J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Peeters, 1999) 289-301.

⁸⁶ Reese, *Wisdom* 180; Winston, *Wisdom* 12; Cheon, *Exodus* 69-70.

nation” (ἔθνος ἅγιον). In 18:4, the Jewish nation is designated οἱ υἱοὶ σου. This is one in a series of designations, elaborated throughout part three of the book, which apply the terms υἱός and παῖς to the Jewish nation. The terms are always in the plural (οἱ υἱοὶ σου 12:19, 12:21, 16:10, 16:23; θεοῦ παῖδες 12:7, παῖδες σου 12:20, οἱ σοὶ παῖδες 19:6, ὅσοι παῖδες 18:9, cf. τέκνα 16:21), or in some way shown to apply to the entire people (ὡμολόγησαν θεοῦ υἱὸν λαὸν εἶναι 18:13). οἱ υἱοὶ σου in 18:4, as all of the designations of the Jewish nation as υἱός and παῖς in 11:1-19:22, serves as a flashback to the description of the suffering righteous figure in 2:12-20, who is described as παῖς κυρίου (2:13) and υἱὸς θεοῦ (2:18; cf. 2:16). In this way the designation in 18:4 serves to reinforce the identification of the suffering but eschatologically vindicated righteous figure of 2:12-5:13, whom we have seen the author of Wisdom associated with the παῖς of the first (42:1-9) and fourth (52:13-53:12) Servant Songs in LXX Isaiah, with the entire faithful remnant of the Jewish nation.

The author alludes more explicitly to the Servant Songs as he goes on in 18:4 to describe the nation more fully. They are designated “your sons, through whom the imperishable light of the law was destined to be given to the world” (τοὺς υἱούς σου, δι’ ὧν ἡμελλεν τὸ ἀφθαρτον νόμου φῶς τῷ αἰῶνι δίδοσθαι). The combination here of the description of Israel as οἱ υἱοὶ σου (cf. ὁ παῖς μου, LXX Isaiah 42:1), the idea of an intermediary role of Israel for the world (τῷ αἰῶνι), and the association of this function with the language of light (τὸ ἀφθαρτον νόμου φῶς), reveal the dependence of the author here upon LXX Isaiah’s description of the παῖς as a φῶς ἐθνῶν (42:6, 49:6). Wisdom 18:4 reveals that the interpretation of the light to the nations in LXX Isaiah, according to which light comes to the gentiles through the nation of Israel, has been fully imbibed by the author of Wisdom. Moreover, Wisdom 18:4 makes clear that it is in their role as mediators of God’s law (τὸ ἀφθαρτον νόμου φῶς) that Israel illumines the gentiles. This association of the Servant’s role for the gentiles with the law most likely reflects LXX Isaiah 42:4c: καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ νόμῳ αὐτοῦ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν.⁸⁷ In this the author also reveals his dependence upon the wider Jewish tradition which associated

⁸⁷ On the text-critical question involved here in LXX Isa 42:4c, see n. 27 on pages 103-104.

light and the law.⁸⁸ Through his emphatic connection of 17:2 with 18:4, the author of Wisdom also connects Exodus 19:6 with Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, identifying Israel's status as a holy nation and royal priesthood with this mediatorial role for the gentiles.

Yet there is no indication that the author of Wisdom understood this mediatorial role to involve a mission to the gentiles. As we saw earlier, the author of Wisdom interpreted the first Servant Song as referring to Israel in the eschatological time of fulfillment. In light of the author's earlier application of ἀναλάμψει of Isaiah 42:4 (cf. Wisdom 3:7 ἀναλάμψουσιν) and κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐξοίσει of Isaiah 42:1 (cf. Wisdom 3:8 κρινούσιν ἔθνη) to eschatological Israel, it is apparent that he also understood the appellation φῶς ἔθνῶν, drawn from LXX Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, to apply to Israel specifically in the eschatological era, and it is to this era which he alludes in Wisdom 18:4. It is thus very doubtful that Wisdom 18:4 represents the conviction on the part of the author of a mediatorial role of Israel among the nations in his own day, as is usually supposed.⁸⁹ The choice in Wisdom 18:4 of δι' ὧν rather than ὑφ' ὧν is also significant: the nation is conceived not as acting but as an instrument through which God (δίδοσθαι, divine passive) will act. The expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Israel appears to underlie the author's thought in Wisdom 18:4. A very similar conception is present in Tobit 13:13 (Codex Sinaiticus), where the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations is associated with the shining of a bright light to the ends of the earth:

φῶς λαμπρὸν λάμψει εἰς πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς· ἔθνη πολλὰ μακρόθεν ἥξει σοι καὶ κάτοικοι πάντων τῶν ἐσχάτων τῆς γῆς πρὸς τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ἁγιόν σου.

⁸⁸ Cf. Sirach 45:17; 4 Ezra 14:20-22; 2 Baruch 17.4-18.2; 46.1-3; 59.2; *Targum Isaiah* 35.5; *Testament of Levi* 19.1. See also LXX Isa 26:9; cf. on this passage Olley, *Righteousness* 150; Seeligmann, *Isaiah* 108; Koenig, *L'herméneutique* 136-41. This association was further strengthened by the translation, which occurs at times in the Old Greek (Septuagint) but is followed consistently in the καίγε recension, of διδάσκειν ("teach") by φωτίζω (see Michael Smith, "Another Criterion for the καίγε Recension," *Bib* 48 [1967] 443-45). So for example in Isa 2:3, the divine instruction which the gentiles are to receive at mount Zion is rendered by Aquila and Theodotion, following an older translational tradition, as φωτίσει ἡμᾶς ("he will illumine us"); cf. Justin, *Dial.* 19.2-3. In the same passage *Targ Isa* renders רִנָּה in 2:5 as "the teaching of the law."

⁸⁹ So for instance Carleton Paget, "Jewish Proselytism" 84; Bertholet, *Stellung* 272-73; McKnight, *Light* 37, 53; Reese, *Wisdom* 186; Cheon, *Exodus* 73; Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* 60.

A bright light will shine to all the ends of the earth. Many nations will come to you from afar off, and peoples from the ends of the earth will come to your holy name.

The combination of “light” (φῶς), “gentiles” (ἔθνη) and “ends of the earth” (τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς; τῶν ἐσχάτων τῆς γῆς) in this passage is, like Wisdom 18:4, shaped by LXX Isaiah 49:6, and reflects a similar interpretation of the passage. In Wisdom, as in LXX Isaiah and Tobit, the Servant passages of Isaiah were interpreted, not of a present-day mission to the gentiles, but in terms of a mediatorial role of Israel in the time of the impending eschatological pilgrimage of the nations.

3.6 The Parables of Enoch 48, 62

The value of the *Parables of Enoch* (=1 Enoch 37-71) as evidence for second temple Judaism is questionable in view of the uncertainty which surrounds the dating and provenance of the *Parables*.⁹⁰ How-

⁹⁰ The older critical consensus which dated the *Parables* in the first century B.C.E. was shattered by the conspicuous absence of any trace of the work from Qumran Cave 4. The most radical reassessment of the earlier consensus was offered by J.T. Milik, who argued that the *Parables* was a Christian work composed in the third century C.E. (“Problèmes de la littérature hénoclique à la lumière des fragments Araméens de Qumran,” *HTR* 64 [1971] 333-78; idem, *Books of Enoch* 89-107). Milik’s identification of the work as Christian is accepted by Grelot (*Les poèmes* 136-37) but has in general found little favor. However, while Milik’s drastically late dating of the work has not been followed, there is no longer any firm consensus that the work was composed in the second temple period, although a date within that period remains the most common view. The *Parables* is dated in the first century C.E., but prior to 70 C.E., by Matthew Black, “The Messianism of the Parables of Enoch: Their Date and Contribution to Christological Origins,” *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 161-62; idem, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch* (Leiden: Brill, 1985) 187-88; John J. Collins, “The Son of Man in First Century Judaism,” *NTS* 38 (1992) 451-52; D.W. Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (SBLDS 47; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979) 23-33; J.C. Greenfield and M. Stone, “The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of Similitudes,” *HTR* 70 (1977) 51-65; and E. Sjöberg, *Der Menschensohn im äthiopischen Henochbuch* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946) 35-39; to the last quarter of the first century C.E. by Michael Knibb, “The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review,” *NTS* 25 (1979) 345-59; and to the early second century C.E. by J.C. Hindley, “Towards a Date for the Similitudes of Enoch. A Historical Approach,” *NTS* 14 (1967/68) 551-65. Gabriele Boccaccini, however, opts for a date in the first century B.C.E., arguing that the text is absent at Qumran because it was intentionally excluded by the Qumran community (“Qumran and the Enoch

ever, the strong likelihood that the work reflects second temple Jewish traditions warrants a brief examination of the evidence which it provides for attitudes toward gentiles and their conversion in ancient Judaism. Strikingly, close study of the passages in the *Parables* which most strongly express interest in gentile conversion reveals that these passages, like those we have examined in LXX Isaiah, Wisdom and Tobit, were shaped by exegetical reflection on the Servant Songs of the book of Isaiah. However, in this work the Servant of Isaiah 49:1-6 is identified, not, as in LXX Isaiah and Wisdom, with the Jewish nation, but with an eschatological messianic figure called the Son of Man and the Chosen One.⁹¹ It is likely, although not certain, that the author of the *Parables* also interpreted Isaiah 42:1-9 messianically.⁹² The Son of Man is explicitly described, in the

Groups,” *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran* [ed. James H. Charlesworth; Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 2000] 87-89). All things considered, a date in the late first century B.C.E. or early first century C.E. seems likely. See the judicious remarks of George W.E. Nicklesburg, “The Books of Enoch at Qumran. What We Know and What We Need to Think About,” *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum* (FS Hartmut Stegemann; eds. B. Kollmann, W. Reinbold, and A. Steudel; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999) 101; and James C. VanderKam, “1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature,” *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (CRINT III.4; eds. James C. VanderKam and William Adler; Assen: van Gorcum, 1996) 33.

⁹¹ In chapters 48 and 62 the picture of the advent and victory of this messianic figure is filled with allusions to Isa 49:1-7, e.g. Isa 49:1 (*Enoch* 48.2), Isa 49:2 (*Enoch* 48.6, 62.6-7), Isa 49:6 (*Enoch* 48.4), and Isa 49:7 (*Enoch* 48.5-6, 62.1, 3, 5-6, 9; cf. 55.4). The dependence of *Enoch* 48 and 62 upon Isaiah 49:1-7 is conclusively demonstrated by Johannes Theisohn, *Der auserwählte Richter* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975) 118-26; Martin Rese rightly calls the allusions to the second Servant Song in these chapters “unambiguous” (“Überprüfung” 31). Cf. also J.C. Vanderkam “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37-71,” *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 189-91; Black, “Messianism” 156-61; idem, *Enoch* 210-12, 235-36; Suter, *Tradition* 118, 154, 177 (n. 86).

⁹² The designation “the Chosen One” is probably an allusion to Isa 42:1 and thus seems to reflect a messianic interpretation of that passage (see *Enoch* 39.6, 40.5, 45.3-4, 49.2, 49.4, 51.3, 51.5, 52.6, 52.9, 53.6, 55.4, 61.5, 8, 10, 62.1). See further note 93 below. This is accepted by Jeremias (“παῖς θεοῦ,” 687-88), Suter (*Tradition* 26-27), and North (*Suffering Servant* 7), but rejected by Theisohn (*Richter* 123) and Rese (“Überprüfung” 30-33). Jeremias (ibid.) in addition argued strongly for a messianic interpretation of Isa 52:13-53:12 in the *Parables of Enoch* (cf. Vanderkam, “Righteous One” 189; Suter, *Tradition* 118-19; Wolff, *Jesaja* 53 42-43), but while there are possible allusions to Isa 53 in the *Parables* (e.g. 38.2, 53.6 [=Is 53:11?], 46.6, 48.8 [=Is 52:15?], 62.1ff. [=Is 52:13-15?]), these are not certain (cf. Rese, “Überprüfung” 31-33; Grelot, *Les poèmes* 131-36; Martin Hengel, “Zur Wirkungsgeschichte von Jes 53 in vorchristlicher Zeit,” *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und*

language of Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, as “the light of the gentiles” (*1 Enoch* 48.4), because the victory of this eschatological figure over the wicked results in the conversion of the nations (48.5; cf. 50.1-3).⁹³ In the *Parables*, as in LXX Isaiah, Wisdom and Tobit, the “light to the nations” of Isaiah 49:6 is thus associated with the eschatological conversion of gentiles.

The intense interest in conversion of gentiles in *1 Enoch* 48.4-5 is extraordinary, and has led to the suspicion that it is a Christian interpolation.⁹⁴ Yet as we have seen, interest in conversion of gentiles was widespread in ancient Judaism. Moreover, the passage hardly reflects, as some have suggested, any thought of mission; the author’s thought rather reflects the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, in which the gentiles convert of their own accord in the time of God’s eschatological reign (cf. esp. 48.5; 50.2), and he associated the “light to the gentiles” of Isa 49:6 (and possibly 42:6 as well) with this event.⁹⁵ There is in the passage no reflection whatsoever on pre-eschatological conversion of gentiles, nor any thought of a responsibility or mission of Israel to seek converts.⁹⁶ The *Parables* reveals that the eager expectation of a future conversion of the nations, which we have seen evident in such diaspora texts as LXX Isaiah, the third Sibyl and Wisdom, was also cherished by Jews in Palestine.⁹⁷

seine Wirkungsgeschichte [eds. B. Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996] 65-66).

⁹³ The further description of this figure in 48.4b as “the hope of those who are troubled in their hearts” may also allude to Isa 42:4c and 51:5b, as Aalen (*Licht* 224) suggests. If so, Isa 42:4c is in the *Parables*, as LXX Isaiah but in contrast to IQIsa-a, specifically interpreted in terms of the conversion of the gentiles. For interpretation of Isa 42:4c in the Qumran scroll, see p. 103 above.

⁹⁴ Cf. Sjöberg, *Menschensohn* 19-20; Aalen, *Licht* 224-25.

⁹⁵ Rightly Bosch, *Heidenmission* 39. On the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, see above, pp. 59-62, 105-107, 116-117, 126-127. It is noteworthy that the *Parables*, as *Sibylline Oracles* 3, also reveals a vivid expectation of judgement upon all nations (*Parables* 38; cf. *Sib. Or.* 3.517-44). It is widely supposed that such convictions of a coming divine judgement preclude an expectation of conversion of gentiles in the eschatological time (e.g. Carleton Paget, “Jewish Proselytism” 86-87 [n. 86]). However, this is simply a failure to read the texts, which await both judgement on the rebellious nations, and deliverance for gentiles who turn to the God of Israel (e.g. *Parables* 48-50; *Sib. Or.* 3.545-656; *1 Enoch* 90-91 [= *Dream Visions of Enoch*]; *Ps. Sol.* 17). Conversion and judgement of the nations belong together in Jewish thought (cf. the discussion above, p. 77).

⁹⁶ On the future, eschatological character of the reign of the Son of Man in the *Parables*, see Boccaccini, “Enoch Groups” 87-88.

⁹⁷ Cf. also the evidence from the book of Tobit examined earlier (see pp. 126-

The light for the conversion of the nations in Isaiah 49:6 is in the *Parables* not identified, as in LXX Isaiah and Wisdom, with the eschatological Jewish nation, but with the messianic Son of Man. Light imagery does occur in connection with the righteous of Israel in *Parables* 39.7, where it is said of the faithful of the nation that “all the righteous and elect shall shine as fiery lights” (39.7; cf. 38.4). In *1 Enoch* 104.2 we find a similar reference to the elect community as lights: ὡσεὶ φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀναλάμπετε καὶ φανεῖτε. However, the language of these passages was apparently shaped, not by the book of Isaiah, but by Daniel 12:3, which describes the wise who lead the many to righteousness as shining like the stars of heaven in the coming eschatological age.⁹⁸ Daniel 12:3 is an important focus of exegetical reflection in second temple Judaism. The imagery of Daniel 12:3 is utilized in a wide variety of ancient Jewish texts (e.g. *1 Enoch* 38.4, *2 Enoch* 66.7, *2 Baruch* 51.3, *Test. Mos.* 10.9, *4 Macc* 17:5; cf. *Mt* 13:43). The same tradition is reflected in *4 Ezra* 7.97 (*incipiet vultus eorum fulgere sicut sol, et . . . incipient stellarum adsimilari lumini*) and 7.125 (*super stellas fulgebant facies eorum*). As F. Raurell notes, Daniel 12:3 “has had a strong influence on the subsequent development of the theme of the shining of the righteous.”⁹⁹ In these texts, the imagery of Daniel 12:3 is never used in isolation, but in a profoundly exegetical way which draws upon the full context of the book of Daniel, especially Daniel 12:1-3. Throughout second temple Jewish literature, this imagery functions, as it does in Daniel 12, to describe the blessedness of the suffering and afflicted righteous remnant of Israel in the time of their resurrection and vindication in the impending eschatological era.

Strikingly, Daniel 12:3 itself contains an evident literary allusion to Isaiah 53:11, apparently applying the fourth Song in a collective sense and identifying the “wise” (הַמְּשָׁכִלִים cf. *Isa* 52:13, (מְשַׁכֵּל עַבְדִּי) and “those who make the many righteous” i.e. instruct the many in the way of righteousness (מְדַיְקֵי הָרַבִּים cf. *Isa* 53:11,

127 above). The expectation is also clearly evident in other texts of Palestinian provenance in the second temple period, e.g. *Ps. Sol.* 17:30-34; *1 Enoch* 10:21-22 [= *Book of the Watchers*]; *1 Enoch* 90:30-39 [= *Dream Visions of Enoch*]; cf. *Sirach* 36:1-17.

⁹⁸ Cf. LXX *Dan* 12:3: φανούσιν ὡς φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; see Black, *Enoch* 198; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection* 121-122.

⁹⁹ “The *Doxa* of the Seer in *Dan*-LXX 12,13,” *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (ed. A.S. van der Woude; Leuven: Peeters, 1993) 526 (n. 23).

(צָדִיק צָדִיק עֲבָדֵי לַרְבִּים) with the figure of the Servant.¹⁰⁰ In Daniel 12:3, as in Wisdom of Solomon, the suffering and death of the Servant figure are applied to the sufferings and martyrdom of faithful Jews for the sake of their God, and the exaltation of the Servant is interpreted of their bodily resurrection and glorification in the eschatological time of renewal. However, in the subsequent Jewish exegetical tradition Daniel 12:3 and Isaiah 53 are, as far as our evidence indicates, never explicitly connected. The imagery of Daniel 12:3 functions in the *Parables*, as elsewhere in second temple Judaism, to describe the blessedness in the coming age of those who have remained true to their God in spite of suffering, affliction and even death (cf. *1 En.* 38.1-4; 39.7-8; 102-104; *2 En.* 66.5-7; *2 Bar.* 51.1-3; *4 Macc* 16.1-17.6; *4 Ez.* 7.88-99). In the *Parables* this age will dawn with the coming of the messianic Son of Man, who is identified with the light to the nations of Isaiah 49:6, and whose advent will bring about the conversion of the nations.

3.7 Philo of Alexandria

A full analysis of Philo's understanding of conversion, and of the role of Israel in the world, would perforce involve almost every aspect of his thought, and is well beyond the limits of this study. Our purpose here is merely to touch upon some traditions on which Philo draws in his treatment of these topics. Philo's most thorough discussion of conversion is found in the tractate "On Repentance" (Περὶ μετανοίας) in his work *On the Virtues* (175-186).¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ This is widely recognized; cf. John J. Collins, *Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 385, 393; Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation* 493; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection* 24-25; Michael Knibb, "You Are Indeed Wiser Than Daniel: Reflections on the Character of the Book of Daniel," *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (ed. A.S. van der Woude; Leuven: Peeters, 1993) 406-407; Hengel, "Wirkungsgeschichte" 60-64.

¹⁰¹ The transmission history of *De Virtutibus* is complex, and it has been questioned whether the tractate Περὶ μετανοίας originally belonged to that book, and whether it originally formed an independent treatise within the larger work (see E. Hilgert, "A Review of Previous Research on Philo's *De Virtutibus*," *SBL Seminar Papers* 1991 [ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991] 104-107). However, the authenticity of the tractate is not in doubt. It is often suggested that the book's target audience included gentiles (cf. E.R. Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and his *De Vita Mosis*," *HTR* 26 (1933) 109-25; Georgi, *Opponents* 182 [n. 59]; Hilgert, "Research" 111-112). However, there is no direct evidence in the work that it is addressed to gentiles, and it has been more plausibly suggested that the

3.7.1 On Repentance (*Virt* 175-186)

In this treatise Philo associates μετάνοια primarily with conversion of gentiles, and proselytes to Judaism are the main focus of the tractate.¹⁰² In the opening of the treatise Philo portrays Moses as urging all people everywhere to pursue piety and righteousness, that is, to convert:

Loving virtue and goodness and above all his fellow human beings, the most holy Moses urges all people everywhere (προτρέπει τοὺς πανταχοῦ πάντας) to be zealous for piety and righteousness, offering to those who convert (τοῖς μετανοοῦσι), as to victors, the great rewards of membership in a commonwealth which is the very best and of enjoyment of the benefits, both small and great, which that commonwealth provides. (175)

Such conversion or repentance, Philo continues, is a virtue, even if only of secondary rank, for while not to sin at all is the property of God, or perhaps of a divine man¹⁰³ as well, conversion is the mark of “a person who is wise and not entirely without knowledge of what is beneficial for him” (176-177).

Such people (τοὺς τοιούτους) therefore he [i.e. Moses] calls to himself, gathering and initiating them, and offering them the irenic and benevolent instructions which exhort (παραينوῦσιν) them to practice truth and cast vanity aside, to embrace truth and the rejection of vanity as supremely necessary and the path to happiness, by rebelling against mythical fables, which from infancy parents and nannies and guardians and countless other acquaintances engraved upon their still impressionable souls, leading them endlessly astray from the knowledge of the chief good. And what is the best of all existing things except God?” (178)

Moses is pictured as preaching (προτρέπει [175]) to gentiles and actively soliciting them (τοὺς τοιούτους συνάγων καὶ μυσταγωγῶν προσκαλεῖται, τὰς συμβατηρίους καὶ φιλικὰς προτείνων ὑφηγήσεις [178]).¹⁰⁴ The way in which one must imagine Philo conceived this

work is addressed to a mixed audience of native Jews and proselytes; cf. Jon Nelson Bailey, “*Metanoia* in the Writings of Philo Judaeus,” *SBL Seminar Papers 1991* (ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta: Scholars, 1991) 138-39.

¹⁰² Cf. Bailey, “*Metanoia*” 138-40

¹⁰³ On the meaning of “divine man” (θεῖος ἀνὴρ) in this passage, see Holladay, *Theios Aner* 173-98.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Aalen, *Licht* 212; see also *De vita Mosis* 2.189. Riesner (“Jewish Mission”

to take place was through the reading and exposition of the law to gentiles in attendance at the synagogues.¹⁰⁵ The synagogue service in Philo's mind thus seems to have had, at least in part, a protreptic or proselytizing function.

In view of the paradigmatic role of Moses in Philo's thought (cf. *De Vita Mosis* 1.158-59), one must assume, with Peder Borgen, that here "Moses' instruction is a model for the instruction of pagans in Philo's own time."¹⁰⁶ If so, the passage would seem to offer evidence that Philo envisaged an active preaching mission to pagans, for which he saw Moses as the model. However, such a conclusion would ignore the way in which Moses' example actually functions within *Virt* 175-78. This is made clear by the words which follow:

Therefore (οὖν) all people whosoever did not from the beginning deem fit to worship the creator and father of the universe but afterwards welcomed the rule of one instead of the rule of many, must be considered most dearly loved friends (φιλάτους) and closest family members, since they have supplied the most important requirement for love (φιλίαν) and friendship, a God-loving character . . . (179a-b)

The inferential connector οὖν, as well as the repetition of terms used in the description of Moses, show that in 179a-b Philo indicates the desired application of Moses' example set forth in 175-78. As Moses models love for humanity (φιλόανθρωπος [175]; φιλικὰς προτείνων ὑφηγήσεις [178]) in urging all people (τοὺς πανταχοῦ πάντας [175]) to convert, Philo's readers are to demonstrate the same attitude of love (φιλάτους [179a]; φιλίαν [179b]) toward all (πάντας [179a]) gentile converts to Judaism. The activity of Moses indeed seems to involve *two* phases: the bringing of gentiles to conversion (προτρέπει, 175), and the instruction of the new converts (παρανοῦσιν, 178).¹⁰⁷ However, in applying Moses' example to his readers, Philo calls attention only to the latter phase and the treatment due new converts, without reflecting directly on how they came to conversion. Philo's readers are urged to follow the pattern of Moses, not by

241) denies that the preaching of Moses in 175-178 has the conversion of gentiles in view, but this is clear from the context of the passage (*Virt.* 175-186).

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Acts 15:21, where the reading of Moses in the synagogue is described as *preaching* to gentiles (Μωυσῆς . . . κατὰ πόλιν τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτὸν ἔχει ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς); see also Rom 2:21; *Spec. Leg.* 2.61-62.

¹⁰⁶ Peder Borgen, "The Early Church and the Hellenistic Synagogue," *Studia Theologica* 37 (1983) 59; cf. *idem*, "Proselytes" 66.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.1.

preaching to pagans, but by imitating his φιλανθρωπία in their gracious acceptance of new converts.¹⁰⁸ Philo's aim in *Virt.* 175-86 is to promote such acceptance of proselytes as equal members of the community; he does not envision here an active outreach to gentiles, and the terms he uses elsewhere for conversion suggest that in his mind the initiative in conversion lay with individual gentiles, not the Jewish community.¹⁰⁹

Philo goes on to describe the conversion of gentiles from idols to the worship of the true God as a turning from darkness to light:

It is incumbent upon us also to rejoice with them [i.e. proselytes], as with those who, although they were at one time blind, have now received sight, inasmuch as from deepest darkness they have now beheld a most radiant light. (καθάπερ ἂν εἰ καὶ τυφλοὶ πρότερον ὄντες ἀνέβλεψαν ἐκ βαθυτάτου σκότους αὐγοειδέστατον φῶς ἰδόντες) (179c)

Philo depicts unconverted gentiles as blind (τυφλοί) and in darkness (ἐκ βαθυτάτου σκότου), and describes their conversion as light (αὐγοειδέστατον φῶς). While Philo's language is reminiscent of the Servant Songs of Isaiah, Philo here is apparently not dependent on Isaiah, but reflects a wider tradition which associated light with conversion.¹¹⁰ Interestingly, unlike the other texts we have examined in this chapter, Philo specifically applies the language of light,

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Bailey, "Metanoia" 138.

¹⁰⁹ Philo uses sometimes προσήλυτος (*Spec.* 1.51; 1.308), which we have seen he explains as from προσέρχεσθαι (τούτους δὲ καλεῖ προσηλύτους ἀπὸ τοῦ προσελλυθέναι καινῇ καὶ φιλοθέῳ πολιτείᾳ, *Spec.* 1.51); more often he refers to the convert as ἐπηλύτης, derived similarly from ἐπέρχεσθαι (*Virt.* 102; 103; 182; 219; *Spec.* 1.52; 1.309; 4.177-78; *De Vita Mosis* 1.147; also ἐπήλυτος, *Virt.* 104 and ἔπηλυς, *Praem.* 152). For other terms used by Philo to describe the conversion event and which similarly suggest a centripetal notion of conversion, see note 116 below. Philo's repeated pleas for acceptance of proselytes in *Virt.* 179 and elsewhere (cf. *Virt.* 102-104; *Spec.* 1.51-52; 4.178), far from providing evidence for an active Jewish mission, may rather suggest that not all Jews welcomed proselytes wholeheartedly. Cf. Anthony J. Guerra, "The One God Topos in *Spec. Leg.* 1.52," *SBL Seminar Papers 1990* (ed. D.J. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars, 1990) 154.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Philo's descriptions of the conversion of Tamar (ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ καθάπερ ἐκ σκότους βαθύς ἐδυνήθη βραχεῖαν αὐγὴν ἀληθείας ἰδεῖν [*Virt.* 221]) and of Abraham (καθαρὰν αὐγὴν ἀντὶ σκότους βαθύς βλέπειν ἀρξάμενος ἠκολούθησε τῷ φέγγει [*Abr.* 70]); see also *Spec.* 1.54; *Heres* 76-78; and cf. Antonie Wlosok, *Laktanz und die philosophische Gnosis* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1960) 83-84; and Franz-Norbert Klein, *Die Lichtterminologie bei Philon von Alexandrien und in den hermetischen Schriften* (Leiden: Brill, 1962) 43-61. Compare the description of conversion to philosophy in Lucian, *Nigrinus* 4: ἔχαιρον ὥσπερ ἐκ ζοφεροῦ ἀέρος ἐς μέγα φῶς ἀναβλέπων, and Seneca, *Ep.* 44.2, where the light of philosophy is said to shine (*lucet*) for all.

not to eschatological conversion of gentiles, but to the accession of proselytes in his own day.¹¹¹

Philo delineates two essential features of this illumination. The first is the abandonment of idolatry to worship and honor the one God who alone exists (179; 181 [ἡ τοῦ ὄντος θεοῦ τιμή]; cf. *Virt* 213-16, 219-20; also *Spec* 1.52 [ἡ τοῦ ἑνὸς θεοῦ τιμή]). Philo refers to belief in one God as τὸ πρῶτον καὶ ἀναγκαιότατον τῶν εἰς μετάνοιαν (180).¹¹² The other necessary element is the abandonment of vice and the practice of virtue (180-182; cf. *Virt* 222), which according to Philo follows ineluctably upon conversion to honoring of the one true God (180-182; cf. *Virt* 216).¹¹³ The same twofold emphasis upon monotheism and ethical behavior, which we saw in the understanding of gentile conversion in the third *Sibylline Oracle*, is explicit in Philo's description of conversion in *De Virtutibus* 179-82.

According to Philo, the reward which Moses offers proselytes for their conversion to the service of the true God is citizenship in the Jewish commonwealth, the "best of all states" (πολιτεία...ἡ ἀρίστη, 175; cf. *Spec* 3.167 ἡ ἀρίστη πολιτεία). Philo also elsewhere frequently describes Judaism as a πολιτεία.¹¹⁴ Other Jewish documents from antiquity reveal that this was a common designation for the Jewish nation.¹¹⁵ Philo is particularly fond of describing the Jewish nation in this way when, as here, he is discussing the conversion of gentiles to Judaism. Upon forsaking their former country, gentile converts

¹¹¹ Light is also associated with the conversion of Aseneth in *Joseph and Aseneth* 8.10 and 15.13. However, I am unconvinced by the current consensus that the work is Jewish rather than Jewish Christian. The issues involved cannot be entered into here; for the arguments for *Joseph and Aseneth* as a Jewish work, see Christoph Burchard, *Untersuchungen zu Joseph und Aseneth* (WUNT 8; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1965) 99-107; Marc Philonenko, *Joseph et Aseneth: Introduction, Texte Critique, Traduction et Notes* (Leiden: Brill, 1968) 99-102.

¹¹² Cf. *Decal* 65; *Spec* 3.29.

¹¹³ On the centrality of ethical monotheism in Philo's understanding of conversion, see Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* 61-65; Borgen, "Proselytes" 63-64.

¹¹⁴ E.g. *Decal* 98; *Spec* 1.60; 1.63; 1.314; 1.319; 2.123; 3.24; 3.51; 4.59; *Mos* 2.211.

¹¹⁵ For the description of Judaism as a πολιτεία, cf. *Letter of Aristaeus* 310; Josephus, *Ap.* 2.260-261; 2 Macc 6:1; 11:25; 3 Macc 3:4; 4 Macc 4:23; 5:16. See also the Stobi inscription (3rd century C.E.), in which a certain Polycharmus describes himself as πολιτευσάμενος πᾶσαν πολιτείαν κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαισμόν. According to Tessa Rajak, "the sentence must at any rate be a way of referring to the donor's involvement with the Jewish religion and not at all a matter of acting in the interests of Judaism within the larger *politeia*, the city in which Polycharmus lives" ("Groups" 248).

become citizens of a “new and godly nation” (καινή καὶ φιλόθεος πολιτεία) (*Spec* 1.51). They have made the good journey from idolatrous customs to “a truly alive and living commonwealth” (ἔμψυχος τῷ ὄντι καὶ ζῶσα πολιτεία) (*Virt* 219).

Philo apparently prefers this term when discussing conversion in order to emphasize the change of citizenship which conversion to Judaism involved for gentiles.¹¹⁶ In describing Judaism as a πολιτεία, Philo reminds his readers that the Jewish community is an alternative πόλις requiring the renunciation of one’s previous citizenship for those who wish to enter. Moreover, in contrast to terms such as γένος or ἔθνος which describe the Jewish nation as united by ties of blood, the term πολιτεία describes the nation as united by a common law and way of life, and thus accents the idea that the basis of membership in the Jewish nation is not physical descent but the decision of the individual to serve the one truly existent God (183-186).¹¹⁷ This πολιτεία is thus universal in that it welcomes people of all nations who honor the one God and live by his laws.¹¹⁸ In emphasizing the ethical, volitive requirements for inclusion in the Jewish nation (175,

¹¹⁶ The abandonment of one’s previous citizenship which conversion to Judaism demanded is also stressed in Philo’s favorite term for gentile converts, ἐπιλύτης (“immigrant”); see *Virt* 102; 103; 182; 219; *De Vita Mosis* 1.147; *Spec.* 1.52; 1.309; 4.177-78; cf. ἐπιλύτος, *Virt* 104 and ἔπηλυς, *Praem.* 152. This emphasis is also evident in the verbal phrases which Philo uses to describe the conversion event (e.g. αὐτομολεῖν πρὸς θεόν [*Praem.* 152]; μεταχωρεῖν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν [*Spec.* 1.309]; καλὴν ἀποικίαν στέλλεσθαι [*Spec.* 4.178; *Virt.* 102, 219]; μετανιστάναι εἰς ἀλήθειαν [*Spec.* 4.178]; and μεθορμίζεσθαι [*Spec.* 1.51]). See also Michael Lattke, “The Call to Discipleship and Proselytizing,” *HTR* 92 (1999) 359-362; Ellen Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo’s Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 202-203.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *Spec* 1.51, and see H.A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1947) 2.356-400.

¹¹⁸ Philo can accordingly describe this πολιτεία in mystical and trans-historical terms as a heavenly community made up of all people of wisdom and virtue; cf. *Confus. ling.* 78 (πατρίδα μὲν τὸν οὐρανὸν χώρον ἐν ᾧ πολιτεύονται, ξένην δὲ τὸν περίγειον ἐν ᾧ παρώκησαν νομίζουσαι); *Gig* 61; and see Clara Kraus Reggiani, “I rapporti tra l’impero romano e il mondo ebraico al tempo di Caligola secondo la ‘Legatio ad Gaium’ di Filone Alessandrino,” *ANRW* II.21.1 (1984) 582-86. Philo nevertheless identifies this πολιτεία with the concrete Jewish nation made up of the native-born and proselytes; see Peder Borgen, “Philo of Alexandria. A Critical and Synthetic Survey of Research since World War II,” *ANRW* II.21.1 (1984) 113-117; C. Moeller, *Die biblische Tradition als Weg zur Gottesschau: eine Hermeneutik des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandria* (Tübingen: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1976); Wlosok, *Laktanz* 97-107; somewhat differently J.M. Bassler, *Divine Impartiality: Paul and a Theological Axiom* (SBLDS 59; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982) 109-19.

179-182, 184-186), Philo both stresses the necessity for converts to renounce pagan loyalties, and provides a rationale for the acceptance of proselytes as equal members of the Jewish community.¹¹⁹

3.7.2 *De specialibus legibus* 2.162-67; *De Vita Mosis* 1.149; *De Abrahamo* 98

In several passages Philo refers to the Jewish people as a nation of priests for all humanity. According to A. Bertholet, this conception expresses the strong sense of mission felt by many Jews to win the gentiles over to the worship of the true God.¹²⁰ Did Philo indeed understand the priestly vocation of the Jewish nation to involve a missionary purpose?

Philo undoubtedly did understand the priesthood of the Jewish nation to involve a mediatorial role for the gentiles. This is evident in *De specialibus legibus* 2.162-67, where Philo affirms that the Jewish nation stands in the same relation to the world as a priest to a city (ὄν λόγον ἔχει πρὸς πόλιν ἱερεὺς, τοῦτον πρὸς ἅπασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην τὸ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος [163]). According to Philo, this priestly office has been conferred upon Israel as a consequence of her obedience to the divine law (163) and exclusive worship of the one God (164-66). Similarly in *De Abrahamo* 98, Philo describes Israel as “the most godly of nations (ἐθνῶν τὸ θεοφιλέστατον), which I believe has received the office of priest and prophet on behalf of every nation of humanity (τὴν ὑπὲρ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους ἱερωσύνην καὶ προφητείαν λαχεῖν).” As in *Spec* 2.162-67, Philo in this passage understands the priesthood of the Jewish nation to be exercised on behalf of the gentiles (ὑπὲρ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους).¹²¹

Israel is similarly identified as a nation of priests in Exodus 19:6: “And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests (יְהִיְכֶם כְּהֻנָּה) and a

¹¹⁹ Cf. Guerra, “One God” 153-54.

¹²⁰ Bertholet, *Stellung* 281-82; similarly Carleton Paget, “Jewish Proselytism” 84; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 62-63. According to Käsemann, these passages are evidence of “missionary work in the Diaspora” (*Romans* 70).

¹²¹ In *De Abr* 98 Philo unites this priestly office (ἱερωσύνη) with a prophetic one (προφητεία). The combination of offices would appear to be explained by Philo’s conviction expressed elsewhere that the true priest is by necessity a prophet as well (ὁ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἱερεὺς εὐθὺς ἐστὶ προφήτης, *Spec* 4.192). Cf. *Praem* 55-56, and see Wolfson, *Philo* 2.16-22. Philo’s use in this passage of a single article for the two substantives (τὴν ὑπὲρ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους ἱερωσύνην καὶ προφητείαν) shows that he indeed regards them as twin aspects of a single office.

holy nation.” This passage is almost certainly the source of the tradition reflected in Philo. In MT Exodus the holy and priestly status accorded to Israel involves the idea of a mediatorial role for the nations at most only implicitly. However, the LXX version of Exodus 19:6 (ὅμοιός μοι βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον), particularly in the translation of וְיִהְיֶה by the collective ἱεράτευμα, may strengthen the idea of a priestly role of Israel for the nations.¹²² And in Isaiah 61:6a, where the promise is present that in the time of Yahweh’s coming reign Israel will be a nation of priests (LXX, ὅμοιός μοι ἱερεῖς κυρίου κληθήσεσθε, λειτουργοὶ θεοῦ), this priestly service is clearly exercised in behalf of the nations.¹²³ Similarly in Wisdom of Solomon and the third Sibylline Oracle, as we have seen, Israel in the coming eschatological age will have a priestly and prophetic function for the nations. Likewise in Philo, this mediatorial understanding of Israel’s priesthood is made explicit.

How did Philo understand the Jewish people to carry out this mediating role for the nations? The Jewish nation, according to *De specialibus legibus* 2.162-67, performs this priestly office (ἱεράται [163]) for the world through its offering to God of prayers and worship in behalf of the entire human race (162, 167). In *De Vita Mosis* 1.149 Philo similarly describes the people of Israel as “a nation (ἔθνος) which out of all the others was ordained to be a priest (ἱεραῖοι), in order ever to make prayers in behalf of all humankind, that they might be preserved from evils and partake of good things (ὕπερ τε κακῶν ἀποτροπῆς καὶ μετουσίᾳ ἀγαθῶν).” Thus in both *De specialibus legibus* 2.162-167 and *De Vita Mosis* 1.149, Philo understands Israel’s priestly service for the gentiles to consist in her offering of prayers in behalf of the human race.¹²⁴ In *Spec* 2.162-67 Philo identifies these prayers with the prayers offered by the high priest, whose duties Philo elsewhere (*De vita Mosis* 2.131-35; *Spec* 1.97) portrays as consisting of the offering

¹²² See L. Cerfaux, “Regale Sacerdotium,” *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux* II (BETL 6/7; Gembloux: Duculot, 1954) 287-91. He is followed by John Hall Elliot, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4-10 and the Phrase βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα* (Leiden: Brill, 1966) 69.

¹²³ Cf. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* 181-82; Elliot, *Elect* 61-62.

¹²⁴ For Philo, as elsewhere in Judaism of the second temple period (outside Qumran), the function of the priesthood was viewed as primarily cultic, and not didactic; see Ernest Best, “Spiritual Sacrifice: General Priesthood in the New Testament,” *Interpretation* 14 (1960): 273-75; Jean LaPorte, “The High Priest in Philo of Alexandria,” *Studia Philonica Annual* 3 (1991) 71-82. Cf. Heb. 5:1; 7:25; 8:3.

of prayers and sacrifice (εὐχάς τε καὶ θυσίας [*De vita Mosis* 2.133]; τάς τε εὐχάς καὶ θυσίας [*Spec* 1.97]) on behalf of the entire human race and all the elements of nature (*Spec* 1.97), that sins may be passed over and blessings bestowed (πρός τε ἀμνησίαν ἀμαρτημάτων καὶ χορηγίαν ἀφθονωτάτων ἀγαθῶν [*De vita Mosis* 2.134]). Justin witnesses to a possibly related Jewish exegetical tradition which identified the “pure offering” (LXX: θυσία καθάρᾳ) of Malachi 1:11 with the prayers offered by Jews in the diaspora communities.¹²⁵ In the Philonic passages these prayers have an intercessory and mediatorial function, but do not have the conversion of gentiles in view.¹²⁶ The social reality underlying Philo’s theological description of the Jewish nation as a priest for the gentiles was not a Jewish mission, but the offering of prayers by the high priest, and perhaps other Jews as well, for the merciful preservation of the whole realm of nature on behalf of the entire human race. Philo thus understands the priestly role of the Jewish people to involve a mediatorial role for the gentiles, but not a mission for their conversion.

A key difference between Philo on the one hand, and Wisdom and the third Sibyl on the other, is that while these texts envision Israel as carrying out its priestly and prophetic role for the nations in the coming time of Israel’s liberation, Philo understands the Jewish nation, through the prayers offered by the high priest, to have a priestly role for gentiles already in the present. Philo’s stress on the beneficial effects of the present-day priestly service of the Jewish nation through the high priest’s prayers for the entire human race has for him an important apologetic thrust, countering frequent pagan accusations charging Jews with hatred of all humanity.¹²⁷ Did Philo also share the hopes expressed in Wisdom of Solomon and the third Sibyl for a future priestly and/or prophetic role of the Jewish people for the conversion of gentiles? For the answer we must turn to one final Philonic text, *De Vita Mosis* 2.43-44.

¹²⁵ *Dial.* 117.

¹²⁶ Rightly Torrey Seland, “The ‘Common Priesthood’ of Philo and 1 Peter: A Philonic Reading of 1 Peter 2.5, 9,” *JST* 57 (1995) 90-99, 118. Dickson’s portrayal of these prayers as missionary (*Mission-Commitment* 62-66) is not convincing.

¹²⁷ This apologetic thrust is made explicit in *Spec.* 2.167-168.

3.7.3 De Vita Mosis 2.43-44

In *De Vita Mosis* 2.43-44, at the close of his well-known encomium on the Septuagint, Philo expresses his hopes that gentiles will abandon their own customs and embrace the law of the Jewish nation:

Thus the laws are, on the one hand, clearly revealed as worthy of imitation and prized in the sight of all, both people and rulers, even though for many years our nation has not prospered. (And yet the belongings of those whose full time has not yet come (τὰ τῶν μὴ ἐν ἀκμαίᾳς) are by nature in some sense overshadowed in darkness.) But if, on the other hand, there should be [i.e. for the nation] the beginnings of a glorious change (ἀφορμὴ πρὸς τὸ λαμπρότερον), how great an improvement would doubtless take place! I think that every nation, abandoning their own laws and turning away completely from the customs of their fathers, would convert to honoring these laws alone. For the laws, shining forth together with the prosperity of the nation, will outshine the light of all other nations' laws, just as the sun at its rising outshines the stars. (2.43-44)

This passage is often taken as evidence of Philo's missionary zeal to convert all nations.¹²⁸ However, this is a fundamental misreading of the passage. As Peder Borgen has shown convincingly, traditional Jewish eschatological expectations underlie Philo's thought here.¹²⁹ Philo's references to the future prosperity of the nation, however much couched in terms congenial to his hellenized readership, express traditional Jewish hopes for the restoration of Israel's fortunes in the coming eschatological time of promise.¹³⁰ The restoration of the nation will be accompanied, according to Philo, by the conversion of all nations to Judaism: "Philo in *Mos* 2.43-44 envisions the time when all nations will become Jewish proselytes by abandoning their own laws and accepting the laws of Moses."¹³¹ *De Vita Mosis* 2.43-

¹²⁸ So Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 75-77. Carleton Paget similarly relates the passage to a "quasi-missionary" purpose for the Septuagint in the thought of Philo ("Jewish Proselytism" 84). According to Carleton Paget, while *Mos* 2.44 "does not explicitly mention a centrifugal mission . . . it does make perfectly clear the hope that the Torah will attract people to Judaism" (*ibid.*).

¹²⁹ Borgen, "Proselytes" 64-65.

¹³⁰ Cf. Borgen, "Proselytes": Philo refers to the "prosperity of the Jewish nation in the eschatological time" (64). Other passages in Philo which clearly reflect the Jewish national hope of eschatological restoration include *Praem* 79-97; 164-168; *Mos*. 1.290-291. Cf. Borgen, "Proselytes" 64-68.

¹³¹ Borgen, "Proselytes" 65; cf. Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* 73; Barclay, "Universalism" 211-212.

44 provides unambiguous evidence that Philo shared the same hope for the eschatological conversion of gentiles which we have seen in LXX Isaiah, the third Sibyl, the book of Wisdom, and the *Parables of Enoch*. Philo's depiction of the law of Moses "shining forth" to the nations in the time of promise is remarkably similar to the imagery we have examined in Wisdom 18.4 and Tobit 13.13, and may well reflect the same exegetical background in the Isaianic Servant Songs which we have seen underlies these passages.

The content of *Mos* 2.43-44 raises two crucial questions. The first question concerns the full significance of Israel's priestly status for the nations in Philo's thought. As we saw, while the book of Wisdom and the third Sibylline Oracle envision Israel's priestly and prophetic role for the gentiles as carried out in the eschatological time, Philo sees Israel's priestly role as carried out in the present through the prayers of the high priest. Yet in light of *De Vita Mosis* 2.43-44, it is very likely that Philo's full conception of the priestly and prophetic vocation of the nation included its eschatological role in the conversion of the gentiles, even if, perhaps for apologetic reasons, Philo in his discussion of Israel's priesthood refers explicitly only to the present-day blessings showered on all people and the whole realm of nature by the prayers of the nation offered through the high priest.

The second question concerns how Philo envisioned the relationship between gentile converts in his own time and the eschatological conversion of the nations. Two key aspects of *De Vita Mosis* 2.43-44 suggest an answer. The first is Philo's understanding of the theological significance of the gentile adoption of Jewish customs, such as the sabbath, described in *Mos*. 2.17-24. As we saw in chapter one, Philo is referring here to the practice of individual Jewish customs within the context of the polytheistic popular religion, not, as often supposed, to proselytes or sympathizers.¹³² However, Philo clearly understands this widespread imitation of Jewish customs by gentiles as in some sense foreshadowing the gentiles' coming universal adoption of the law (*Mos* 2.12-44). Secondly, the language Philo uses in *Mos* 2:43-44 to describe the eschatological conversion of the nations strikingly mirrors the language he uses elsewhere in discussing contemporary proselytes.¹³³ Taken together, these observations suggest that, just as

¹³² See the discussion above on pp. 44-46.

¹³³ For the extensive parallels, see Borgen, "Proselytes" 64-65.

he understood the pagan adoption of Jewish customs as a proleptic anticipation of the universal sway of the law of Moses in the time of fulfillment, so Philo understood present-day proselytes as in some sense foreshadowing or anticipating the time when all nations would become proselytes to Judaism. Philo's thought here has remarkable affinities with the pattern of thought which we saw in chapter two is widespread in the Hebrew Scriptures, which envision present-day converts within the perspective of the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations, and cherish contemporary converts as proleptic anticipations of Yahweh's coming worldwide reign.¹³⁴ Philo's thinking mirrors this understanding of the relationship between present-day proselytes and the hope of a coming conversion of the nations. This pattern of thought may be traced not only in Philo, but elsewhere in the second temple period as well. In Tobit, for example, the narrator's heartfelt concern for present-day proselytes (1:8 [S]; 13:3-8) exists alongside a fervent expectation of a coming eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Zion (13:13, 14:5-6).¹³⁵

The evidence of key texts of the Hebrew Bible explored in chapter two such as Isaiah 56:1-8 and Psalm 47, together with the evidence from Philo, Tobit, and other Jewish texts of the second temple period, flies in the face, in crucial ways, of much contemporary scholarship on mission and conversion in ancient Judaism. In many treatments, the eschatological character of Jewish thinking in antiquity regarding gentiles is entirely ignored.¹³⁶ In other treatments, the expectation of a future conversion of the nations is acknowledged, but regarded as but one among several competing "models" for gentile inclusion in Jewish thought of the second temple period. Terence Donaldson, for instance, distinguishes a "proselytism" model, which welcomed (and at times actively sought) the conversion of gentiles, from an "eschatological pilgrimage" model, which awaited the conversion of gentiles

¹³⁴ See the discussion in chapter two above, especially pp. 65-66, 68-70, 90-91.

¹³⁵ Cf. the discussion on pp. 126-127.

¹³⁶ See e.g. Johnson, "Proselytism" 148-149; Alan F. Segal, "Universalism in Judaism and Christianity," *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 1-29; idem, "Paul and the Beginnings of Christian Conversion," *Recruitment, Conquest and Conflict: Strategies in Judaism, Early Christianity, and the Graeco-Roman World* (eds. Peder Borgen, Vernon K. Robbins and David B. Gowler; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 97-100; cf. Goldenberg, *Nations*.

in the eschatological future.¹³⁷ But as our evidence from Philo and elsewhere has shown, this way of approaching the evidence distorts rather than illumines, for it holds apart things which emphatically belong together in Jewish thought. The expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations and interest in present-day converts, far from excluding one another, are closely related in Jewish thinking. This in turn may help to explain what has otherwise appeared so perplexing: the lack in ancient Judaism of a consciousness of mission for the nations, side by side an intense eagerness to welcome and instruct gentile converts. Why does Philo reveal a zeal to embrace gentile converts, but provide no evidence of an active mission to gentiles? The explanation is simply that Philo thought Jewishly regarding conversion of gentiles. He did not possess a consciousness of mission for the gentiles, but an expectation of a coming conversion of all nations to the laws of the Jewish nation in the eschatological time of restoration, and he welcomed present-day proselytes to the Jewish commonwealth as foreshadowing its coming universal rule.

3.8 *Romans 2:17-29*

One of the fullest and most direct treatments of Judaism in Paul's letters is found in Romans 2:17-29.¹³⁸ In 2:17-24 Paul addresses an imaginary Jewish interlocutor:

But if you are called a Jew and rely upon the law and boast in God, and know his will and approve what is best, since you are instructed from the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness, an instructor of fools, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the exact expression of knowledge and truth—you who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abominate the idols, do you commit sacrilege? You who boast in law, do you through the transgression of the law dishonor God? For the name of God is blasphemed on your account among the gentiles, just as it stands written.

¹³⁷ *Paul and the Gentiles* 51-78.

¹³⁸ Cf. George P. Carras, "Romans 2,1-29: A Dialogue on Jewish Ideals," *Bib* 73 (1992) 185.

As has been widely recognized, the terminology employed in the description of the interlocutor's self-understanding in Romans 2:17-20 is not Pauline, but draws upon existing formulations and represents contemporary Jewish claims.¹³⁹ At the same time, due allowance must be made for the fact that aspects of Paul's portrayal reflect the polemical framework of the passage, and the Christian context of Paul's thought. With these cautions in mind, the passage provides valuable evidence for Jewish self-understanding in the time of Paul.

In Romans 2:19-20a four epithets describe the Jewish interlocutor specifically in his relation to the gentile world:

πέποιθας τε σεαυτὸν ὁδηγὸν εἶναι τυφλῶν, φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει, παιδεύτης ἀφρόνων, διδάσκαλος νηπίων

Because the relationship of the interlocutor to the gentile world has such a prominent place in the self-understanding which Paul depicts here, it is often supposed that the designations used reflect the claims of putative Jewish missionaries.¹⁴⁰ But the style is diatribal, and as 2:17 shows, Paul clearly has the entire Jewish nation in view, whom he addresses in the person of a representative individual.¹⁴¹ The first epithet (ὁδηγὸν τυφλῶν) is reminiscent of the description of the Jewish nation in the third Sibylline Oracle as guides in the conduct of life for all mortals (οἱ πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι βίου καθοδηγοὶ ἔσσονται, 195). The first two predicates (ὁδηγὸν τυφλῶν, φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει) are also strongly reminiscent of the language of the first and second Servant Songs. Possible echoes of the Songs in these designations include φῶς (cf. Isa 42:6, 49:6 φῶς ἐθνῶν; cf. Rom 2:24 ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν), τῶν ἐν σκότει (cf. Isa 49:9 τοῖς ἐν τῇ σκότει; 42:7 ἐξαγαγεῖν . . . καθημένους ἐν σκότει), and ὁδηγὸν τυφλῶν (cf. Isa 42:7 ἀνοῖξαι ὀφθαλμοὺς τυφλῶν; 42:16 ἄξω τυφλοὺς ἐν ὁδῷ; cf. also 49:9b). Although this is not certain, these predicates thus most

¹³⁹ Heinrich Schlier, "Von den Juden," *Die Zeit der Kirche* (Freiburg: Herder, 1956) 44; Carras, "Jewish Ideals" 199 (cf. 189-93); Michel, *Römer* 127-28; Aalen, *Licht* 191, 227; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 70; Wilckens, *Römer* 148-49.

¹⁴⁰ So Leonhard Goppelt, "Der Missionar des Gesetzes. Zu Röm 2,21f.," *Christologie und Ethik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 138; Sevenster, *Roots* 208-209; Michel, *Römer* 127-32.

¹⁴¹ W.C. van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis der jüdischen Diaspora in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit* (ed. P.W. van der Horst; Leiden: Brill, 1993) 158-59; Ziesler, *Romans* 89-91; Aalen, *Licht* 227.

likely indicate a reading of the Servant passages in Isaiah which, in the tradition of LXX Isaiah, identified the Jewish nation with the Servant figure of Isaiah 42 and 49.¹⁴² The Jewish self-understanding which Paul depicts in Romans 2:19-20a thus apparently understood and described the Jewish nation as the light to a darkened and blind gentile world described in the Servant Songs of Isaiah.

As in Wisdom of Solomon 18.4 and *De Vita Mosis* 2.44, this light is also associated with the law, by means of the causal participial clause ἔχοντα τὴν μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ νόμῳ (2:20b). It is in view of his possession of the law that the Jewish interlocutor whom Paul portrays believed himself to be a light and guide to the gentiles.¹⁴³ Two features of this knowledge whereby the Jews believed themselves to be a light to gentiles emerge from Paul's portrait. The first is Jewish monotheism. This is clear from the further Jewish self-descriptions παιδεύτης ἀφρόνων and διδάσκαλος νηπίων (2:20), for ἄφρονες and νήπιοι were traditional Jewish terms for gentiles, which referred specifically to the practice of idolatry.¹⁴⁴ A second element of this illumination, as Paul depicts it, were the ethical requirements of the law, specifically the decalogue (cf. 2:21 ὁ κηρύσσων μὴ κλέπτειν; 2:22 ὁ λέγων μὴ μοιχεύειν). This characterization of Judaism as consisting of two central elements, exclusive monotheistic worship and the fulfillment of the ethical requirements of the law, was, as we saw, also present in Philo's discussion of gentile conversion, and repeatedly expressed throughout *Sibylline Oracle* 3.¹⁴⁵ This description shows that the way in which gentiles are understood by Paul's Jewish interlocutor to be illumined by the Jewish nation is, as in LXX Isaiah, Wisdom, *Parables* and Philo, through their conversion from idols to the God of Israel.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² So Wilckens, *Römer* 148-49; Käsemann, *Romans* 70; Barnett, "Jewish Mission" 270; and Josef Blank, *Paulus und Jesus: Eine theologische Grundlegung* (München: Kösel, 1968) 227-28; cf. Michel, *Römer* 129 (n. 7).

¹⁴³ Van Unnik, *Selbstverständnis* 158-59; Schlier, "Juden" 43-44; Wilckens, *Römer* 147-49; Dieter Zeller, *Juden und Heiden in der Mission des Paulus: Studien zum Römerbrief* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1973) 157; idem, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1985) 71-72.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Wisdom of Solomon 12.23-25, 14.11, 15.5, 15.14; *1 Enoch* 99.6-9; *Or. Sib.* 3.722. Cf. also Romans 2:22 ὁ βδελυσσόμενος τὰ εἰδωλα.

¹⁴⁵ See *Sib. Or.* 3.218-47, 3.586-600, 3.710-24, and cf. *Sib. Or.* 4.1-34, 5.75-85, 5.165-67, 5.247-285, 5.353-60, 5.403-07, 5.429-31, and 5.489-503.

¹⁴⁶ *Contra* Riesner ("Jewish Mission" 242), who appears to limit this illumination in Rom 2:19-22 to Jewish ethical instruction of gentiles.

It is thus frequently assumed that the self-understanding which Paul describes must have included a strong sense of obligation or mission toward the gentiles.¹⁴⁷ However, interpreters have generally been misled by the Christian and polemical context in which Paul considers the claims of his Jewish interlocutor in Romans 2:17-29. Throughout second temple Jewish literature, as we have seen, the Jewish nation's function as a light and guide for the gentiles is expected as an event of the eschatological time.¹⁴⁸ It was this eschatological expectation which in turn fueled an eagerness to instruct gentile converts in the present.¹⁴⁹ Although this eschatological accent is not explicit in Romans 2:17-24, in light of these texts this is almost certainly the self-understanding which underlies these epithets in Paul's description of Jewish identity here. Paul's treatment, however, focuses on the present-day Jewish nation (2:21-24), in order to anchor his critique in a Christian theological reformulation of two key aspects of Jewish thought in the second temple period. First, Paul reflects Jewish thinking in portraying the Jewish nation as itself captive to evil and in need of eschatological restoration and transformation, through circumcision of the heart through the Spirit (2:21-24, 2:28-29).¹⁵⁰ Second, Paul expresses the widespread Jewish conviction that it is only the righteous of Israel who will be vindicated in the eschatological judgement to come (2:21-24, 27, 29).¹⁵¹ Paul's conclusion in 2:25-29, that gentile Christians who have received the promised eschatological circumcision of the heart through the Spirit are thus the true Israel (2:28-29) who will be vindicated (κρίνει, 2:27; οὗ ὁ ἔπαινος, 2:29) in the judgement to come (2:25-29), thus precisely

¹⁴⁷ So Harnack, *Mission* 12 ("Missionsverpflichtung"); Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise* 12 ("a sense of the duty incumbent upon them to make the divine will known to the heathen"); Sevenster, *Roots* 208-209 ("special mission"); Blank, *Paulus* 227-28; Michel, *Römer* 127-29.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. LXX Isaiah 49:6, *Sib. Or.* 3.195, Wis 18:4, Tobit (Sinaiticus) 13:13, *De Vita Mosi* 2.43-44, and the discussion of these texts above.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Philo, *Virt* 175-186; *Mos* 2.12-44; Isa 56:6-8; Ps 47; Tobit (Sin) 1:8, 13:3-8, 13:13, 14:5-6, and the discussions of these texts above.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *Jub.* 1.23-25; *Ps. Sol.* 17.26-32. Strikingly, *Jub.* 1.23-25 and Rom 2:29, in their portrayal of an eschatological circumcision of the heart, apparently draw upon an identical or similar concatenation of scriptural texts, e.g. Lev 26:40-41; Jer 4:4; 9:25-26; Deut 30:6; Jer 31:31-34; Ez 36:22-32.

¹⁵¹ Cf. 2 Macc 7; Tobit 14:5-7; *T. Jud.* 25.1-5; *T. Mos.* 10.1-10; Josephus, *Ap.* 2.218; and see the discussions of *Sib. Or.* 3.573-600, Wis 2-5, and *Parables of Enoch* earlier in this chapter.

reverses the claims of his Jewish interlocutor in 2:17-20. Paul focuses on the present-day Jewish nation in order to contrast the unredeemed nation with the eschatological community, which he identifies with the church made up of both Jews and gentiles. The nuances of Paul's portrayal are shaped by his argument and clearly reflect his claim that the eschatological revelation of God's righteousness has now dawned in Jesus as messiah (cf. Rom 1:16-17; 3:21-8:38). However, once allowances are made for the aspects of Paul's portrayal which reflect his Christian theological critique and distinctive two-stage eschatological understanding, the self-understanding which underlies the portrayal of his Jewish interlocutor emerges with some clarity. The passage provides no evidence for a Jewish consciousness of mission to gentiles in the sense of a divine command or an obligation to seek proselytes.¹⁵² Rather, we appear to see here the same sort of understanding we saw in Philo: a keen consciousness of the nation's exalted status, in view of its identity as the people of the one God and coming mediatorial role in the conversion of the nations in the eschatological time, accompanied by a readiness to instruct gentiles in the ways of the God of Israel in the present.

3.9 Testament of Levi 14.3-4; 4QLevi-a ar 3-5=4Q213 3-5

Testament of Levi 14.3-4 is regularly brought forward in the literature as evidence for a Jewish mission, usually in an uncritical way which ignores the complex issues surrounding the Jewish origins of the *Testaments*. In its present form the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is a Christian document, composed in Greek probably in the late second century.¹⁵³ However, while the origins of these *Testaments* are perplexing, it is certain that they incorporate older

¹⁵² Rightly Aalen, *Licht* 227-228; Axenfeld, *Propaganda* 49.

¹⁵³ M. de Jonge, "The Main Issues in the Study of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *NTS* 26 (1980) 509-12, 516, 520-24; John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem* (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 154; G.N. Stanton, "Aspects of Early Christian-Jewish Polemic and Apologetic," *NTS* 31 (1985) 378-79. The foundation for study of the *Testaments* is the critical edition of M. de Jonge (*The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* [Leiden: Brill, 1978]); the only full-size commentary is provided by H.W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

Jewish traditional materials.¹⁵⁴ In the *Testament of Levi* in particular, the author apparently utilized a Jewish Levi document very similar to that underlying the various Aramaic Levi fragments found at Qumran and elsewhere.¹⁵⁵ Marinus de Jonge above all has stressed the extent to which the Christian redactor who produced the *Testament of Levi* has throughout much of the work thoroughly recast this earlier material; yet he notes that in chapters 14-15 of *Testament of Levi* the author has apparently followed his Jewish sources very closely.¹⁵⁶ With regard to *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4 in particular, the

¹⁵⁴ It is maintained that our present *Testaments* are an interpolated Christian text of an originally Jewish work, by Jürgen Becker, *Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen* (Leiden: Brill, 1970) and A. Hultgård, *L'Eschatologie des Testaments des Douze Patriarches. 1. Interpretation des textes* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977); M. de Jonge, however, has argued that the *Testaments* are a Christian composition in which Jewish sources have been adapted and thoroughly reworked; see *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of their Text, Composition and Origin* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1953); "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Central Problems and Essential Viewpoints," *ANRW* II, 20, 1: 359-420; "The Transmission of the Twelve Patriarchs by Christians," *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993) 1-28; "Light on Paul from the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs?" *The Social World of the First Christians* (FS Wayne Meeks; eds. L.M. White and O.L. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 100-115; and most recently, "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and Related Qumran Fragments," *For A Later Generation* (eds. R.A. Argall, B.A. Bow, and R.A. Werline; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2000) 63-77.

¹⁵⁵ For the text of these fragments see J.C. Greenfield and M.E. Stone, *Qumran Cave 4. XVII. Parabiblical Texts, Part 3* (DJD 22; ed. G.J. Brooke, et al.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 1-72, and earlier, K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984) 188-209 (includes the Cairo Genizah fragments). For a reconstructed text of *Aramaic Levi* with translation and commentary, see Robert A. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (SBLEJL 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 61-138. The precise relationship between *Aramaic Levi* and the Greek text of the *Testament of Levi* is a point of dispute. M. de Jonge posits direct literary dependence of the author upon a document related to these fragments ("The Testament of Levi and 'Aramaic Levi,'" *Revue de Qumran* 13 [1988] 367-85; "Transmission" 12-15; "Levi in Aramaic Levi and in the Testament of Levi," *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives* [eds. E.G. Chazon and M. Stone; Leiden: Brill, 1999] 71-89; "The So-Called Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament and Early Christianity," *The New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism* [eds. P. Borgen and S. Giversen; Aarhus University Press, 1995] 69). Becker, on the other hand, thinks in terms of traditions shared by the Aramaic Levi material and the Jewish author of the *Testaments*, whose work was later interpolated by the Christian redactor (*Entstehungsgeschichte* 69-105). Kugler similarly believes the Christian work is a relatively conservative redaction of a Jewish *Testament of Levi*, which was in turn directly dependent on *Aramaic Levi* (*Levi-Priestly Tradition* 171-220).

¹⁵⁶ "Levi, the Sons of Levi and the Law, in *Testament Levi* X, XIV-XV and XVI," *De la Tōrah au Messie. Mélanges H. Cazelles* (eds. J. Doré, P. Grelot, M. Carrez; Paris/Tournai: Desclée & Cie, 1981) 517; de Jonge describes the Christian influence in

largely pre-Christian origin of this passage is indeed remarkably confirmed by the Qumran fragment *4QLevi-a ar 3-5* (= *4Q213 3-5*), for these highly mutilated fragments, where their text is preserved, correspond quite strikingly to the text of *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4.¹⁵⁷ This fragment shows that the Jewish traditions underlying *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4 are probably Palestinian in origin.

In *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4 Levi declares to his sons:

καθαρός ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑπὲρ τὴν γῆν καὶ ὑμεῖς οἱ φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὡς ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἡ σελήνη. τί ποιήσουσι πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, ἐὰν ὑμεῖς σκοτισθῆτε ἐν ἀσεβείᾳ, καὶ ἐπάξητε κατάραν ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἡμῶν—ὑπὲρ ὧν τὸ φῶς τοῦ νόμου τὸ δοθὲν ἐν ὑμῖν εἰς φωτισμὸν παντὸς ἀνθρώπου, τοῦτον θέλοντες ἀνελεῖν, ἐναντίας ἐντολὰς τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιώμασιν

The heaven is purer than the earth, and you are the lights of heaven, as the sun and the moon. If you become darkened through impiety, and bring a curse upon our nation, what will all the gentiles do, on behalf of whom the light of the law which was given among you for the illumination of every person, this law wishing to destroy, [teaching] commands contrary to the righteous laws of God

The sons of Levi are in this passage described as lights (ὑμεῖς οἱ φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ).¹⁵⁸ The imagery of *Testament of Levi* 14.3 was apparently shaped by Daniel 12:3, which describes the wise who instruct many in righteousness as shining like the stars of heaven in the coming age of Israel's deliverance.¹⁵⁹ It is virtually certain that the Christian author, in applying this language to the Levitical priests, essentially reflects his Jewish source, for the corresponding

these chapters as "very modest" (ibid.). Cf. Kugler, *Levi-Priestly Tradition* 187-188.

¹⁵⁷ See Greenfield and Stone, *Qumran Cave 4. XVII* 20-23. The text of the fragment was first published by J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976) 23-24, who dated the manuscript to the second century B.C.E. Further discussion in de Jonge, "Sons of Levi" 513, and Michael A. Knibb, "Perspectives on the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha: The Levi Traditions," *Perspectives in the Study of the Old Testament and Early Judaism* (SVT 73; eds F.C. Martínez and E. Noort; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 204. But see now de Jonge's cautions in "Qumran Fragments" (67).

¹⁵⁸ The majority of Family II manuscripts (*gmeafchij*) read οἱ φωστῆρες τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ.

¹⁵⁹ LXX Dan 12:3, ὡς φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; cf. *Test Levi* 14.3, οἱ φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. As noted earlier, the imagery of Dan 12:3 is utilized in a wide variety of ancient Jewish texts, e.g. *1 Enoch* 38.4; 39.7; 104.2; *2 En.* 66.7; *2 Bar* 51.3; *T. Mos.* 10.9; *4 Macc* 17.5; *4 Ezra* 7.97; 7.125; cf. Mt 13:43. Cf. Raurell ("Seer" 526 n. 23); Daniel 12:3 "has had a strong influence on the subsequent development of the theme of the shining of the righteous."

fragments 4*QL**Levi-a* ar 3-4 also describe the sons of Levi as lights.¹⁶⁰ The association of the priesthood with light was widespread in ancient Judaism (*Sir* 45:17; *IQSb* 4.27; 4*QL* 64 (*p Isa*) liv 11c-12a; *Test Levi* 4.3).¹⁶¹ In the texts just adduced the priests are understood to be lights in view of their mediatorial function of preserving and extending the knowledge of the law (cf. esp. *Sir* 45:17; *IQSb* 4.27); similarly in the present passage, Levi describes his sons as lights in view of “the light of the law which has been given among you for illumination of every person” (τὸ φῶς τοῦ νόμου τὸ δοθὲν ἐν ὑμῖν εἰς φωτισμὸν παντὸς ἀνθρώπου). In the phrase τὸ φῶς τοῦ νόμου the exegetical genitive reveals the same identification of the law with light (cf. also *Testament of Levi* 19.1) which we observed in *Targum Isaiah*, *Wisdom* and *Philo*. It is uncertain whether this expression was present in the Jewish source or sources used by the author of the *Testament of Levi*, but this seems very likely; the law is not identified with light in any text of indisputably Christian origin, but the notion was widespread in second temple Judaism (cf. *Sir* 45:17; 2 *Baruch* 17.4-18.2; 46.1-3; 59.2; *Targ Isa* 35.5), and at any rate the association of the priesthood with light presupposes it.¹⁶²

What is unusual about *Testament of Levi* 14.4, however, is that

¹⁶⁰ In view of תחשכו (“you have become darkened”) in fragment 4, which exactly corresponds to σκοτισθήτε in *Testament of Levi* 14.4, it is evident that the words “moon and stars” (הַרְא וְכוכְבִּים) in fragment 3 refer to the sons of Levi mentioned in fragment 4 (“my sons” בני). Cf. de Jonge, “Sons of Levi” 516; Kugler, *Levi-Priestly Tradition* 187.

¹⁶¹ This tradition reflects an emphasis on the teaching role of the priesthood; for the special stress of *Aramaic Levi* on the didactic function of the priesthood, see Kugler, *Levi-Priestly Tradition* 223.

¹⁶² The phrase is ascribed to the *Vorlage* of the Christian redactor by de Jonge (“Sons of Levi” 183) and to a putative Jewish author of the *Testaments* by A. Hultgård (“L’universalisme des Test. XII. Patr.,” *Ex Orbe Religionum* [eds. C.J. Bleeker, S.G.F. Brandon, M. Simon; Leiden: Brill, 1972] 204-205). It is very possible that the Christian redactor understood the words τὸ φῶς τοῦ νόμου as a reference to Jesus (so de Jonge, “Die Paränese in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und in den Testamenten der Zwölf Patriarchen,” *Neues Testament und Ethik* [ed. H. Merklein; Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1989] 548; “Aramaic Levi” 381, 383; “Sons of Levi” 184; de Jonge and Hollander, *Commentary* 170; J. Jervell, “Ein Interpolator interpretiert: Zu der christlichen Bearbeitung der Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen,” *Studien zu den Testamenten der Zwölf Patriarchen* [ed. W. Eltester; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1969] 44); however, the phrase τοῦτον θέλοντες ἀνελεῖν (*Test Levi* 14.4) hardly proves this, for τοῦτον may be masculine simply in agreement with νόμου, and the verb ἀναιρέω can be used to refer to the abrogation of law (cf. Heb 10:9).

according to the text in its present form the beneficiaries of the light of the law include the gentiles (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη). This is striking, since in the texts adduced immediately above the light of the Levitical priesthood does not extend to the nations, but to Israel only.¹⁶³ This might raise the suspicion that the reference to the gentiles in *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4 is the work of the Christian redactor, and that the earlier Jewish stages of the Levi document spoke of the priesthood's illumination of Israel only. While this is possible, in light of the Qumran fragments it is almost certain that the reference to the gentiles in this context was also found in the Christian redactor's Jewish source.¹⁶⁴ Thus the Jewish stage of *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4, as evident from 4QLevi-a ar 3-5, apparently envisioned the light of the Levitical priesthood as related to the gentiles in some way. Whether this involved, as in the Christian text, the light of the law directly illuminating the gentiles cannot be determined with certainty. However, in view of the evidence amassed elsewhere in this chapter, it is certainly possible.

In what way is the light of the Levitical priesthood envisioned as dawning upon the gentiles in *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4 in its present form? The passage is often claimed as evidence for a Jewish consciousness of mission to spread the knowledge of the law among the gentiles.¹⁶⁵ However, within the context of the *Testament of Levi* the function of the sons of Levi as lights is clearly related to the expectation of an eschatological high priest from Levi who will arise as a light for the gentiles (*TL*ev 18.2-9; 4.3-4; cf. *TS*im 7.2; *TR*eu 6.8-11; *TJ*os 19.11). This figure is depicted as a light who will in time to come shine forth to illumine the gentiles with the knowledge of God (*TL*ev 18.3-5, 9; cf. *TJ*ud 22.2; 25.5).¹⁶⁶ These passages concerning an

The alternate reading τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου in *b*, *k* and *i* is certainly secondary, and reflects Christian interpretation (cf. de Jonge/Hollander, *Commentary* 168).

¹⁶³ In Sirach 45:17, for instance, the object of priestly illumination is not the gentiles, but only the Jewish nation itself: ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ [i.e. Aaron] . . . διδάξαι τὸν Ἰακωβ τὰ μαρτύρια καὶ ἐν νόμῳ αὐτοῦ φωτίσαι Ἰσραὴλ ("he granted him . . . to teach the testimonies to Jacob and by his law to illumine Israel"). Cf. *Testament of Levi* 4.3.

¹⁶⁴ Reference to "all peoples" (כָּל עַמִּים) occurs also in 4QLevi-a ar 3, exactly corresponding to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in *Testament of Levi* 14.3-4.

¹⁶⁵ E.g. Bedell, "Mission in Intertestamental Judaism" 23; Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* 60; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 52-53.

¹⁶⁶ Although according to Jervel all of the universalistic elements in the *Testa-*

eschatological high priest, like the other second temple texts examined in this chapter, do not reflect a consciousness of mission, but rather a striking interest in conversion of gentiles in the impending time of Israel's eschatological restoration.¹⁶⁷ That 14.3-4 functions

ments are to be ascribed to the Christian redactor ("Interpolator" 30-61), there is no compelling reason to doubt that the expectation of an eschatological conversion of the gentiles in these passages was already present in the redactor's Jewish source; as this chapter has shown, this expectation was widespread in ancient Judaism. The interest in *Test Levi* 14.3-4 in the law as a light also for the gentiles is attributed to the Jewish stages of the Levi material by Hultgård ("L'universalisme" 205), Becker (*Entstehungsgeschichte* 396), and de Jonge ("Sons of Levi" 517).

¹⁶⁷ There is no evidence in any second temple Jewish text for a consciousness of mission for the gentiles in the present. However, an important shift in Jewish thought regarding gentiles and their conversion appears to have taken place in rabbinic Judaism (a period outside the scope of this study). Many rabbinic texts indicate that Jews have a duty actively to seek converts (e.g. *Sifre Deut.* 32; *Gen. Rab.* 39:16; *Abot R. Nat.* B 26l; b. *Abod. Zar.* 136; *Pf Gen.* 21:33; *TN Gen.* 21:33; *FTP Gen.* 21:33). Riesner ("Jewish Mission" 248-249) wrongly minimizes the evidence, which is extensive. However, the emergence of this notion among the rabbis cannot be securely documented prior to the third century, and may reflect Christian influence (see Goodman, "Proselytizing" 175-185; cf. Robert Hayward, "Abraham as Proselytizer at Beer-Sheba in the Targums of the Pentateuch," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 49 [1998] 24-37). Similarly, in Jewish texts from this period the purpose of Israel's dispersion is the accession of proselytes in the pre-eschatological time (2 *Baruch* 1.4; *Pesahim* 87b). As Riesner notes, this understanding seems to represent "a new interpretation of the Jewish Diaspora in relation to the Gentiles" arising only after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. ("Jewish Mission" 224). Conversely, in many texts from the second century C.E. onwards, the hope of an eschatological conversion of gentiles is apparently diminished or even abandoned (e.g. 4 *Ezra* 13.21-58; 2 *Bar* 72-73). Whether or how soon these shifts in Jewish thinking regarding gentiles were reflected in a corresponding shift in interpretation of the Servant passages in Isaiah is unclear. In Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* (mid-second century C.E.), Justin's dialogue partners interpret Isa 42:6 and 49:6 as referring to the attachment of proselytes to the Jewish nation: ταῦτα ὑμεῖς μὲν εἰς τὸν γῆόραν καὶ τοὺς προσήλυτους εἰρῆσθαι νομίζετε (*Dial.* 122.1); cf. 122.4: ἀλλὰ τί; οὐ πρὸς τὸν νόμον λέγει καὶ τοὺς φωτιζομένους ὑπ' αὐτοῦ; οὗτοι δὲ εἰσιν οἱ προσήλυτοι. However, it is uncertain whether Justin's interlocutors are referring to proselytes in the present or eschatological era. A similar ambiguity is present in *Contra Celsum* 1.54-55, where Origen's Jewish debating partner connects the conversion of proselytes to Judaism with a collective interpretation of the fourth Servant Song of Isaiah (1.54), interpreting the passage as "prophesied of the whole people depicted as a single individual (ὡς περὶ ἑνὸς τοῦ ὅλου λαοῦ), brought into a state of dispersion (γενομένου ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ) and misfortune, in order that many proselytes might convert, on account of the scattering of Jews among the other nations (ἵνα πολλοὶ προσήλυτοι γένωνται τῇ προφάσει τοῦ ἐπεσπάρθαι Ἰουδαίους τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσι)" (1.55). This interpretation might point to an influx of proselytes in the eschatological time of restoration, for in the Fourth Song the "many nations" come to see and comprehend as a result of the Servant's exalta-

within the context of the vivid eschatological hopes expressed in chapter 18 is underscored by the allusion in 14.3-4 to Daniel 12:3, which describes the coming redemptive age. *Testament of Levi* thus does not provide evidence of a Jewish mission, but, to the extent that this Christian text reflects its Jewish source, does provide strong evidence for the expectation of a future conversion of the nations through the reign of an eschatological high priest from Levi. It is in view of this expectation that the sons of Levi in *Test Levi* 14.3-4 are described, in the language of Daniel 12:3, as “the lights of heaven” for both Israel and the gentiles.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that there existed a widespread and intense interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews of the second temple period. This interest is widely evident, both in texts from the diaspora (e.g. LXX Isaiah, *Sibylline Oracles* 3, Wisdom and Philo) and from Palestine (e.g. *Parables of Enoch*, *Testament of Levi*, Tobit). It is also noteworthy that Paul in Romans 2:17-29 can simply assume such an understanding on the part of his Jewish interlocutor. By the same token, this chapter has also shown that a diversity of attitudes existed in second temple Judaism regarding gentiles and their conversion. The *Isaiah Targum*, together with the evidence from *IQIsa-a*, Qumran and elsewhere, clearly reveals that an interest in gentile conversion was not shared by all Jews in antiquity. Nevertheless, the evidence from a wide diversity of Jewish texts, both in the diaspora and Palestine, reveals that in the second temple period interest in conversion of gentiles was remarkably intense and widespread.

However, this did not involve a mission for the gentiles, but rather an eager expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in the impending time of Israel's ingathering and restoration. This expectation is a widespread, fundamental and characteristic feature of Jewish thinking regarding gentiles in the second temple period. To be sure, in some Jewish thought of the period, the hope

tion (52:15; 53:10-12). However, it is also possible that the interpretation refers to the accession of proselytes in the present. The changes which take place in Jewish thinking regarding gentiles after the destruction, the reasons for these changes, and their connection to exegesis of Scripture, are issues requiring further study.

of an eschatological pilgrimage of the gentiles is marginalized and of little importance (*IQIsa-a*, *Targum of Isaiah*, Qumran). But even in such circles, as the evidence of *Targum Isaiah* indicates, this expectation was not absent, however little enthusiasm it may have generated. In many more second temple Jewish texts, by contrast, the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion is a regular and significant feature of Jewish eschatological expectation, and clearly an object of fervent hope and longing (e.g. LXX Isaiah, *Sibylline Oracles* 3, Wisdom, *Parables of Enoch*, Philo, Tobit, *Testament of Levi*).

Moreover, as we saw in Philo and the book of Tobit, in ancient Jewish thought proselytes in the present were understood within the perspective of this eschatological hope, as in some sense anticipating the ingathering of the nations in the time of Israel's restoration. In the second temple period, the context of Jewish interest in present day converts is not a Jewish mission, but the expectation of a future conversion of the nations to the God of Israel. In much modern scholarship, this expectation is either entirely ignored, or else regarded as but one among several competing 'models' for gentile inclusion in antiquity. Such approaches are profoundly unhistorical, for they force Jewish thought regarding gentiles into categories alien to Jewish thinking in antiquity. Far from excluding one another, the expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations and interest in present day converts emphatically belong together in Jewish thought.

This chapter has also revealed, contrary to conventional scholarly wisdom, a vital relationship between scriptural exegesis and understandings of gentile conversion in second temple Judaism. In their focus upon the hope of an eschatological conversion of the nations, eager interest in present day converts within the context of that hope, and massive use of scriptural language and imagery, the texts we have examined reveal a clear dependence on the Scriptures, especially the book of Isaiah. Strikingly, the Servant Songs of Isaiah, in which the focus of Isaiah 40-55 on Yahweh's activity for the nations reaches its climax, are in second temple texts a major focus of exegetical reflection on conversion of gentiles and the role of Israel for the nations. In many Jewish texts, including LXX Isaiah, Wisdom, Tobit, the *Parables of Enoch*, and perhaps Philo as well, the light of the first two Servant Songs is associated with the eschatological conversion of gentiles. However, these texts reveal a diversity of interpretations regarding the identity of the Servant in the first two Songs. In LXX Isaiah and Wisdom, and probably in the self-understanding of the

Jewish interlocutor portrayed by Paul in Romans 2, the Servant is identified with the nation of Israel and its mediatorial role for the gentiles in the coming time of promise. In the *Parables*, by contrast, the Servant is identified with the messianic Son of Man, whose advent brings about the conversion of the nations. *Targum Isaiah* likewise identifies the Servant of the first Song with the messiah, but does not associate his activity with conversion of gentiles. Second temple sources also reveal a variety of interpretations regarding the identity of the Servant in the fourth Song. In Wisdom of Solomon and in the book of Daniel, the passage is interpreted of the suffering and eschatological salvation of the faithful remnant of the Jewish nation. In *Targum Isaiah*, by contrast, the passage is interpreted of the messiah and his military deliverance of Israel from suffering and exile. And yet, despite a diversity of interpretations regarding the identity of the Servant, second temple Jewish texts uniformly interpret the Servant Songs in terms of the redemption and restoration of Israel in the coming eschatological era.

In these second temple texts we also discovered other traditions relating to conversion of gentiles and to Israel as the mediatorial community. Philo frequently describes Judaism as a πολιτεία in order to emphasize the Jewish nation as an alternative polis open to all people but requiring the renunciation of one's previous citizenship for entry. In Philo, *Wisdom* and *Sibylline Oracles* 3, the tradition of Israel as a nation of priests and prophets also reflects a mediatorial understanding of the Jewish nation in the eschatological time. Philo also understands the Jewish nation to function as priest and prophet for the nations in the present time through the prayers of the high priest, but, significantly, this does not involve the conversion of gentiles. In *Testament of Levi* the Levitical priests are called, in language shaped by Daniel 12:3, the "lights of heaven" in view of the role of the eschatological high priest from Levi in illumining gentiles in the impending time of fulfillment. These and the other traditions examined reflect a widespread interest in conversion of gentiles. There is, however, no evidence in any second temple text for a consciousness of mission to the gentiles or an obligation of Israel to seek gentile converts. Jewish thought of the second temple period, shaped by the Scriptures, and especially the Servant Songs of Isaiah, rather envisaged Israel as a light for the nations in the impending time of the God of Israel's eschatological reign.

CONCLUSION TO PART ONE

Many scholars have sought the origins of the early Christian mission in a prior Jewish mission to gentiles. However, although proselytes and sympathizers from among the gentiles may have been drawn to the Jewish community in antiquity in fair numbers, there were no Jewish missionaries, and evidence which might suggest active proselytizing by Jews is sparse indeed. The lack of evidence in the second temple period for Jewish missionizing activity has suggested to some scholars that there was a lack of interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews in antiquity. This study, by contrast, has shown that interest in gentiles and their conversion is widely evident in the Hebrew Scriptures, above all the book of Isaiah. However, this did not involve the concept of a mission of Israel to the gentiles, but rather an intense expectation of an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Zion, linked with an interest in present day conversions as an anticipation of this future ingathering of the gentiles. The focus in Isaiah upon the nations is most prominent of all in chapters 40-55, and reaches a climax in the Servant Songs, where the Servant is commissioned as a "light to the nations" in the time of Yahweh's impending eschatological reign. The Servant Songs thus contain the unique expression in the Old Testament of a mission for the gentiles; however, the identity of this figure is not explicit in Isaiah.

This study has also documented a widespread and intense interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews throughout the second temple period. To be sure, interest in conversion of gentiles was not shared by all Jews in antiquity. However, this interest is strikingly evident in many texts, both in Palestine and the diaspora, and was certainly widespread. This did not, however, involve a consciousness of mission to the gentiles or an obligation actively to seek proselytes. Shaped profoundly by exegesis of the Scriptures, especially the book of Isaiah, Jewish thought regarding gentiles in the second temple period rather centered in the hope of a pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in the eschatological time of Israel's restoration. In Jewish thinking in antiquity, as seen in Philo and elsewhere, present day proselytes were understood within the context of this expectation, as in some sense anticipating the conversion of the nations to Judaism in the impending time of the nation's restoration.

This profoundly Jewish understanding of the role of Israel for the nations, evident in the Jewish documents examined in chapters two and three, illumines in turn the hotly debated evidence for Jewish proselytizing activity in antiquity discussed in chapter one. The problem of Jewish mission is, in a sense, simply this: why is there firm evidence in the second temple period for an eagerness to embrace and instruct gentile converts, but little or no evidence for active efforts to convert gentiles? Many scholars, giving full weight to the evidence for an eagerness on the part of some Jews to welcome gentile converts, have assumed the existence of a Jewish mission (e.g. Georgi, Feldman, Carleton Paget). Other scholars, recognizing the lack of evidence for proselytizing activity or a consciousness of mission in ancient Judaism, have concluded that Jews in antiquity had little or no interest in conversion of gentiles (e.g. Goodman, Kraabel). A solution to the problem of Jewish mission has proven elusive, because the solutions proposed have in each case failed to explain a good portion of the evidence.

This study, by contrast, suggests that scholars have worked with false alternatives, because they have failed to grasp Jewish thinking in antiquity regarding gentiles and their conversion. The Jewish documents we have examined reveal an intense interest in conversion of gentiles, but the context of this interest is not a Jewish consciousness of mission, but the expectation of a future conversion of gentiles in the impending time of the Jewish nation's eschatological restoration. In Jewish thinking, proselytes in the present time anticipate this coming conversion of the gentiles. The expectation of a future pilgrimage of the nations and interest in present day proselytes belong together in Jewish thought. This Jewish understanding explains both the eagerness of Jews to embrace gentile converts, and the lack of a Jewish mission to gentiles.

This study has also shown that the Hebrew Scriptures, above all the book of Isaiah, played a formative role in Jewish understandings of the role of Israel in regard to the nations. Strikingly, the Servant Songs of Isaiah, in which the focus in Isaiah 40-55 on Yahweh's activity for the nations reaches its climax, are in second temple Judaism a major focus of exegetical reflection on conversion of gentiles and Israel's function for the nations. In a widespread exegetical tradition, the "light to the nations" of the first two Servant Songs is associated with the eschatological pilgrimage of the gentiles, and the Servant is identified with the nation of Israel and its mediatorial role

for the nations in the impending time of the nation's eschatological restoration. Other texts, however, identify the Servant in these Songs with an individual, messianic figure. A similar diversity existed in interpretation of the fourth Song, the Servant of this Song being variously identified with the messiah (although without associating either sufferings or death with this figure), and the suffering but eschatologically vindicated righteous remnant of the Jewish nation. Despite this variety of identifications of the Servant, Jewish interpretation in the second temple period is unified in understanding the exaltation of the Servant to take place in the time of Israel's eschatological redemption and restoration. The widespread Jewish interest in conversion of gentiles in antiquity is also reflected in the tradition of Israel as a nation of priests and prophets for the gentiles in view of its role for the nations in the coming time of eschatological fulfillment. However, second temple sources provide no evidence of a Jewish mission, and Jewish thought in antiquity betrays no hint of a consciousness of mission to the gentiles. Shaped by the Scriptures, especially the Servant Songs of Isaiah, Jewish thought in the second temple period rather envisaged Israel as a light for the nations in the impending time of the nation's eschatological restoration.

If, then, there was no prior Jewish mission to gentiles, what is the source of the missionary consciousness which pervades Paul's letters? Did the Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion we have traced in second temple sources play a role in the understanding of mission in earliest Christianity? What role, if any, did exegesis of Scripture, especially the Servant Songs of Isaiah, play in Paul's understanding of mission? As we will see in Part Two, Paul's missionary thinking was steeped in the Jewish traditions regarding gentiles and their conversion uncovered in Part One of this study, and study of the letter to the Philippians in its Jewish context will illumine both the origins of Paul's own missionary consciousness, and his understanding of the role of his churches in the spread of the gospel. The Jewish character of Paul's thought is the key to unlocking his understanding of church and mission.

PART TWO

MISSION IN PHILIPPIANS

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL IN PHILIPPIANS 1:12-18A

4.1 *Introduction*

In this second part of our study we turn to the early Christian mission, and specifically to the question of the role which Paul envisioned his churches as having in the extension of the gospel. We will focus our attention throughout upon Paul's letter to the Philippians. Such a focus upon the book of Philippians for the illumination of this question may seem surprising. The letter has received very little attention in treatments of early Christian mission, and interpreters have not traditionally identified mission as a major concern of the epistle. Scholars have in fact, as Robert Jewett has observed, found great difficulty in identifying any unifying focus or central theme within the letter.¹ Many exegetes have considered the personal and occasional nature of the epistle to preclude any systematic progression of thought within the letter.² Many interpreters also continue to regard the letter as composite, and thus *eo ipso* as lacking any unifying focus or central interest.³

¹ Robert Jewett, "The Epistolary Thanksgiving and the Integrity of Philippians," *NovT* 12 (1970) 49.

² E.g. Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (WBC 43; Waco, Texas: Word, 1983) xlviii ("the letter follows no logical progression"); William Hendricksen, *Exposition of Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962) 37-38; John Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) v, xxxi ("thrown off without any steady or definite aim"); J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953) 68.

³ Those who regard the canonical letter as a compilation of three originally independent Pauline letter fragments include John Reumann, "Contributions of the Philippian Community to Paul and to Earliest Christianity," *NTS* 39 (1993) 438-57; Wolfgang Schenk, "Der Philipperbrief in der neueren Forschung (1945-1985)," *ANRW* II.25.4 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1987) 3280-84; idem, *Die Philipperbriefe des Paulus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984) 334-38; G. Barth, *Der Brief (sic!) an die Philipper* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1979); Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 28 (n. 116); N. Walter, "Die Philipper und das Leiden: aus den Anfängen einer heidenchristlichen

Recent studies, however, have amply demonstrated the literary unity and finely crafted character of the canonical letter.⁴ A yet more fundamental advance is represented by recent studies which call attention to features of the *topos* of friendship which occur throughout the letter and which identify Philippians as in large part a paraenetic letter of friendship.⁵ In Philippians Paul utilizes these traditions to bind

Gemeinde," *Die Kirche des Anfangs* (eds. R. Schnackenburg, J. Ernst, J. Wanke; Freiburg: Herder, 1978) 417-33; J.F. Collange, *L'épître de Saint Paul aux Philippiens* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux/Niestlé, 1973); L. Keck, "Philippians," *Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971) 846 (two letters); J. Gniska, *Der Philipperbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968) (two letters); H. Koester, "The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment (Philippians III)," *NTS* 8 (1961-62) 317-32; G. Bornkamm, "Der Philipperbrief als paulinische Briefsammlung," *Neotestamentica et Patristica* (NovTSup 6; Leiden: Brill, 1962) 192-202; F.W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Black, 1959); D. Rahtjen, "The Three Letters of Paul to the Philippians," *NTS* 6 (1959-60) 167-73; W. Schmithals, "Die Irrlehrer des Philipperbriefes," *ZTK* 54 (1957) 297-341; and J. Müller-Bardorff, "Zur Frage der literarischen Einheit des Philipperbriefes," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich v. Schiller Universität Jena* 7 (1957-58) 591-604.

⁴ See especially William S. Kurz, "Kenotic Imitation of Paul and of Christ in Philippians 2 and 3," *Discipleship in the New Testament* (ed. Fernando F. Segovia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 103-26; David E. Garland, "The Composition and Unity of Philippians: Some Neglected Literary Features," *NovT* 27 (1985) 141-73; Duane F. Watson, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and Its Implications for the Unity Question," *NovT* 30 (1988) 57-88; idem, "The Integration of Epistolary and Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians," *The Rhetorical Analysis of Scripture* (JSNTSS 146; eds. S. Porter and T. Olbricht; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 398-426; idem, "A Reexamination of the Epistolary Analysis Underpinning the Arguments for the Composite Nature of Philippians," *Early Christianity and Classical Culture* (FS Abraham J. Malherbe; NovTSup 110; eds. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht and L. Michael White; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 157-177; G.W. Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi: Conventions of Gift Exchange and Christian Giving* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 91-93, 99-161; Jeffrey T. Reed, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Jonas Holmstrand, *Markers and Meaning in Paul* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1997) 88-144; Jewett, "Thanksgiving" 51-53; W.J. Dalton, "The Integrity of Philippians," *Bib* 60 (1979) 97-102; and T.E. Pollard, "The Integrity of Philippians," *NTS* 13 (1966-67) 57-66. While not all of the proposals in these aforementioned studies are equally convincing, and some of them in fact understate the evidence considerably, their cumulative weight is sufficient to establish the integrity and careful composition of the letter. That so many scholars have regarded the letter as informal and artless is perhaps the highest tribute to its art. Philip Sellev has recently claimed to have found new external evidence for a composite letter ("*Laodiceans* and the Philippians Fragment Hypothesis," *HTR* 87 (1994) 17-28); however, Sellev's arguments are capably deflated by Paul A. Holloway, "The Apocryphal *Epistle to the Laodiceans* and the Partitioning of Philippians," *HTR* 91 (1998) 321-325.

⁵ The presence of friendship language in Philippians and its importance for interpretation was the discovery of Abraham J. Malherbe, whose students have in

himself and his co-workers to the Philippians, and the Philippians to one another in a community of friendship. This raises the question of the precise relationship between these hellenistic friendship motifs and the specifically Christian and Jewish language and motifs with which these traditions are so closely conjoined throughout the letter. That is, to what hortatory end does Paul employ the language of friendship in this letter? The presence of opposition (1:28; 2:20-21; 3:2-6; 3:18-19), and the emphasis throughout the letter upon suffering (1:29-30; 2:27-30; 3:10; 4:5; 4:11-14), also raise the question of Paul's precise paraenetic aim in utilizing the language of friendship in Philippians.

4.2 *The Gospel in Philippians*

A feature of the letter which has been largely overlooked is the remarkable concentration in Philippians of language relating to the gospel, mission and preaching.⁶ The word εὐαγγέλιον occurs more

turn followed up his insights in creative ways; see Stanley K. Stowers, "Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven: Reading Theology in Philippians," *Pauline Theology, Volume I: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon* (ed. J.M. Bassler; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 105-21; L. Michael White, "Morality between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians," *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (eds. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, Wayne A. Meeks; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 201-215; and Luke T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986) 341-42. See also the articles in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech* (ed. John T. Fitzgerald; Leiden: Brill, 1995) by Ken L. Berry, "The Function of Friendship Language in Philippians 4:10-20" (107-124), Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paul's Self-Sufficiency (Philippians 4:11)" (125-139), and John T. Fitzgerald, "Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship" (141-160). For useful caveats, see John Reumann, "Philippians, Especially Chapter 4, As a 'Letter of Friendship': Observations on a Checkered History of Scholarship" in the same volume (83-106). Cf. also J.P. Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ: Christian Community and Commitment in Light of Roman Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) and idem, "Societas Christi: Roman Law and Paul's Conception of the Christian Community," *God's Christ and His People* (eds. J. Jervell and W.A. Meeks; Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1977) 158-74, who nevertheless interprets this language somewhat too narrowly, in terms solely of the Roman legal convention of contractual *societas*, which reflects only one specialized usage of the wider language of friendship; it is this wider tradition upon which Paul draws in Philippians. For a slightly revised version of Sampley's thesis, see Brian J. Capper, "Paul's Dispute with Philippi: Understanding Paul's Argument in Phil 1-2 from his Thanks in 4.10-20," *TJ* 49 (1993) 193-214.

⁶ Among the very few scholars who have noted this aspect of the letter are Robert C. Swift, "The Theme and Structure of Philippians," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 14 (1984) 234-

often in Philippians, despite its brevity, than in any other Pauline letter.⁷ Moreover, in most of these instances the word εὐαγγέλιον does not refer merely to the gospel message, but is a *nomen actionis* referring to the *gospel work*, the activity of extending the gospel.⁸ If one also takes into account the references to preaching (e.g. τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν [1:14]; κηρύσσειν [1:15]; καταγγέλλειν [1:17; 1:18]) and other associated terms (e.g. 1:22; 2:25; 2:30; 3:2; 4:3; 4:17) in the letter, it is clear that Philippians reveals an extraordinary level of interest in the preaching of the gospel. This would suggest that the friendship or partnership between himself and the Philippians which Paul is concerned to stress throughout the letter is related in some way to the advancement of the gospel.

This supposition is confirmed by an examination of the epistolary thanksgiving (1:3-11). The ground of the thanksgiving, and its preeminent element, is the Philippians' partnership with Paul (κοινωνία, 1:5; cf. 1:7 συγκοινωνούς μου).⁹ This reference to the

54, and Peter O'Brien, "The Importance of the Gospel in Philippians," *God Who is Rich in Mercy* (eds. Peter O'Brien and David G. Peterson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986) 213-33; cf. idem, "The Gospel and Godly Models in Philippians," *Worship, Theology and Ministry in the Early Church* (eds. Michael J. Wilkins and Terrence Paige; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 273-84; and idem, "The Fellowship Theme in Philippians," *Reformed Theological Review* 37 (1977) 9-18. Cf. Peterman, *Gift* 90-120.

⁷ 1:5; 1:7; 1:12; 1:16; 1:27 (twice); 2:22; 4:3; 4:15. The word εὐαγγέλιον in Paul always refers to the proclamation of the message to unbelievers, not to the ongoing instruction of existing churches; rightly Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 88-91.

⁸ Cf. esp. 1:5; 1:12; 2:22; 4:3; 4:15; and see O'Brien, "Gospel" 215-29; idem, "Godly Models" 273. For the use of εὐαγγέλιον in Paul to refer to the activity of proclaiming the gospel, cf. Rom 1:1; 1:9; 15:19; 1 Cor 9:14; 10:14; 2 Cor 2:12; 8:18; Gal 2:7; 1 Thess 3:2; Philemon 13; and see Edward Robinson, *A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament* (2nd. ed.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1859) 301-302. In the few instances in Philippians in which εὐαγγέλιον does refer merely to the gospel message (e.g. 1:7; 1:16; 1:27), it is invariably accompanied by a verb or action noun describing either the defense or spread of this message (see the exposition to follow).

⁹ The view is sometimes advanced that Paul describes an additional ground of thanksgiving in 1:3 (ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνηίᾳ ὑμῶν), ἐπὶ here taken as causal and ὑμῶν as a subjective genitive ("for all your remembrance [of me]"); see Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians* (NCB; London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1976) 63-64; P. T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 58-61; Peterman, *Gift* 93-99. However, this view is rightly rejected by most interpreters (e.g. Moises Silva, *Philippians* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992] 48-49; C.J. Ellicott, *A Critical and Grammatical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon* [Andover: Draper, 1872] 19-20; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 82; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 16-17). The formulaic use of μνηία in the context of the thanksgiving

Philippians' κοινωνία in 1:5 serves to introduce the language of friendship which will recur throughout the letter.¹⁰ In adducing the Philippians' κοινωνία with him as the basis of his thanksgiving, Paul also in 1:5 defines the nature of this partnership more precisely: it is ἡ κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. How is this phrase to be understood? Some continental interpreters have taken κοινωνία here in a passive sense, understanding the phrase to refer to the Philippians' belief in the gospel and participation in salvation.¹¹ The construction, however, will hardly admit this meaning, for which one would expect ἡ ὑμῶν κοινωνία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Κοινωνία when accompanied by εἰς always has an active sense, and the prepositional phrase is not a mere periphrasis for the genitive, as sometimes supposed,¹² but rather indicates the goal toward which the κοινωνία is directed.¹³ Accordingly τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, as often elsewhere in Philippians, is here used with reference to the activity of extending the gospel, and the whole phrase is to be understood as "your partnership for the gospel work."¹⁴

period elsewhere for the remembrance made by the one who prays (Rom 1:9; 1 Thess 1:2; Philemon 4; Eph 1:16; 2 Tim 1:3) is decisive.

¹⁰ For the important place of κοινωνία in the vocabulary of friendship, cf. Aristotle, *EN* 8.9.1 (ἐν κοινωνία γὰρ ἡ φιλία), 8.12.1 (ἐν κοινωνία μὲν οὖν πᾶσα φιλία ἔστίν); 8.11.6; 8.11.7; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2.9; and see White, "Morality" 211, 214; Stowers, "Friends" 110-111. For further literature, see Peterman, *Gift* 100 (n. 41).

¹¹ So H. Seesemann, *Der Begriff KOINONIA im Neuen Testament* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1933) 73-74, 79; M. Dibelius, *An die Thessalonicher I II, An die Philipper* (HNT; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1937) 62-63; E. Lohmeyer, *Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1953) 17; Georg Eichholz, "Bewahren und Bewähren des Evangeliums: Der Leitfaden von Philipper 1-2," *Hören und Handeln* (München: Kaiser, 1962) 88-89; G. Friedrich, *Der Brief an die Philipper* (NTD 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1970) 99; John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1975) 48-50; so already Theodoret: κοινωνίαν δὲ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τὴν πίστιν ἐκάλεσε (*MSG* 82, 561).

¹² E.g. Seesemann, *KOINONIA* 75; Dibelius, *Philipper* 63; Lohmeyer, *Philipper* 17; Josef Hainz, *Koinonia: "Kirche" als Gemeinschaft bei Paulus* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1982) 93-94.

¹³ Cf. Rom 15:26, κοινωνίαν τινὰ ποιήσασθαι εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς ("to make from their own resources a certain contribution for the poor"); 2 Cor 9:13, ἀπλότῃ τῆς κοινωνίας εἰς αὐτοὺς καὶ εἰς πάντας ("liberality of the contribution for them and for all"); see Ellicott, *Philippians* 21.

¹⁴ This is widely recognized; cf. O'Brien, "Gospel" 217-18; "Fellowship" 11; Swift, "Theme" 237-38; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 19-20; Martin, *Philippians* 65; Silva, *Philippians* 44-45; Ellicott, *Philippians* 21; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 83; Eadie, *Philippians*

As is well known, the thanksgiving period in Paul serves to introduce the primary themes to be developed in the body of the letter.¹⁵ This is certainly the case in Philippians, where virtually every important topic or theme within the letter is foreshadowed in the epistolary thanksgiving.¹⁶ As the basis for Paul's thanksgiving, the Philippians' partnership with Paul in behalf of the work of the gospel (ἡ κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5) is clearly the central element within the thanksgiving period. Moreover, this element receives added emphasis from its studied reiteration in 1:7, where in describing the Philippians as joint-partakers with him of grace (συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος) Paul identifies the sphere of this participation as his imprisonment and the defense and confirmation of the gospel (ἐν τε τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου καὶ τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου).¹⁷ The thanksgiving period thus identifies the Philippians' partnership for the spread of the gospel as the central theme of the epistle. This fact has rarely been recognized.¹⁸ Interpreters as a result have usually sought arbitrarily to identify this or that sub-theme or motif as the unifying focus of the epistle.¹⁹ Such an approach is inadequate, for the various sub-themes

8-10; Peterman, *Gift* 99-101; Köstenberger/O'Brien, *Salvation* 194; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 123-124. The active sense of κοινωνία in 1:5 is further shown by 1:6, where Paul refers to the partnership of the Philippians for the gospel as an ἔργον ἀγαθόν. This "good work" does not refer to the Philippian community (*contra* Stowers, "Friends" 117; Eichholz, "Bewahren" 89; Martin, *Philippians* 65-66; O'Brien, *Philippians* 64; Lohmeyer, *Philippianer* 63), but to ἡ κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον of 1:5 (rightly Ellicott, *Philippians* 22; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 84; Eadie, *Philippians* 11; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 21).

¹⁵ P. Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings* (BZNW 30; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1939) 27; William G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973) 32-33; Jewett, "Thanksgiving" 53.

¹⁶ Cf. Gordon P. Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers* (SNTSM; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) 206-207; David E. Garland, "Philippians 1:1-26: The Defense and Confirmation of the Gospel," *RevEx* 77 (1980) 328-31; Kurz, "Imitation" 110-111; Swift, "Theme" 236; Watson, "Rhetorical Analysis" 63-64.

¹⁷ See Jacques Schlosser, "La communauté en charge de l'Évangilé," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 75 (1995) 67-76. The τε . . . καὶ construction places the emphasis in the clause upon the second element, the defense and confirmation of the gospel; cf. Ellicott, *Philippians* 24; Eadie, *Philippians* 15.

¹⁸ The lone exceptions are Swift, "Theme" 236-38, and, following Swift, A. Boyd Luter and Michelle V. Lee, "Philippians as Chiasmus: Key to the Structure, Unity and Theme Questions," *NTS* 41 (1995) 89-101. Cf. Dalton, "Integrity" 101; Peterman, *Gift* 90-92.

¹⁹ The surprising lack of attention to Paul's own identification of the central focus of the epistle in the thanksgiving period has engendered a variety of suggestions as to the letter's primary theme. A number of interpreters have regarded

of the letter can be rightly understood only when seen in relation to the central idea which unites them, the Philippians' cooperation with Paul for the extension of the gospel.

In what activity did the Philippians' cooperation with Paul in the work of the gospel consist? Several interpreters have called attention to the marked correspondences between the epistolary thanksgiving (1:3-11) and the conclusion to the body of the letter (4:10-20), in which Paul expresses his joy in the Lord at the recent gift sent by the Philippians to him through Epaphroditus (cf. 2:25-30).²⁰ In this closing portion of the letter Paul describes the Philippians' recent efforts to aid him in his imprisonment (τὸ δόμα, 4:17; τὰ παρ' ὑμῶν, 4:18), in language strikingly reminiscent of 1:5-7, as a joint *participation* with him in affliction (συγκοινωνήσαντες μου τῇ θλίψει, 4:14; cf. 1:7, ἐν τε τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου καὶ τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος). He commends the Philippians for entering into *partnership* with him financially (οὐδεμία μοι ἐκκλησία ἐκοινώνησεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήψεως εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι, 4:15; cf. 1:5, ἡ κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). He stresses that this has taken place from the very *beginning* (ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 4:15; cf. 1:5, ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἡμέρας) until the *present* (ἤδη ποτέ, 4:10; cf. 1:5 ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν).²¹ This concentrated repetition of vocabulary and motifs from 1:5-7 in Paul's elaboration upon the gift in 4:10-20 leave little doubt that Paul understood the financial contributions of the

suffering as in some sense the primary focus of the letter (e.g. Gregory Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians* [JSNTS 78; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993]; Jewett, "Thanksgiving" 51), and Lohmeyer argued that martyrdom was the theme of the epistle (*Philipper* 36-37). Other interpreters, from Bengel onwards, have suggested joy in Christ as the main theme (e.g. J.J. Muller, *The Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959]; H.A.W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians, and to Philemon* [4th ed.; New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1889]). Others have regarded the exhortation to unity as the primary hortatory thread in the letter (e.g. Gerald Blazek, "Unity Through Humility in Philippians" [Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1977]; Robert Gromacki, *Stand United in Joy* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980]). Other interpreters have despaired of finding any unified progression of thought within the letter (see notes 2 and 3 above).

²⁰ See Peterman, *Gift* 91-93; Garland, "Composition" 162 (n. 75); Dalton, "Integrity" 101; Silva, *Philippians* 47.

²¹ On Paul's acceptance of monetary assistance from the Philippians and his general practice in this regard, see Wilhelm Pratscher, "Der Verzicht des Paulus auf finanziellen Unterhalt durch seine Gemeinden: Ein Aspekt seiner Missionsweise," *NTS* 25 (1979) 284-98; Peterman, *Gift* 163-171.

Philippians to his ministry in terms of their partnership with him for the gospel which forms the subject of the epistolary thanksgiving (1:5). Paul thus places the gift and its meaning within the context of mission and the furtherance of the gospel. Paul's emphasis, in his theological understanding of the gift, on mission is striking.

But how, precisely, was the Philippians' gift to Paul related to their partnership with him for the spread of the gospel? Many interpreters understand the partnership of the Philippians of which Paul speaks in 1:5 to refer solely, or at least primarily, to the gifts received from the Philippians in support of his mission.²² Others have argued that in Paul's understanding the Philippians' partnership for the gospel, while including the gift, involved much more.²³ Is Paul's use of the language of partnership to describe the Philippians' contribution in 4:10-20 meant to identify this partnership with their financial aid, or rather to draw out the significance of the gift and place it into the wider context of that partnership for the extension of the gospel of which Paul speaks in the epistolary thanksgiving? What Ellicott called "the studiously general character of the expression" in 1:5 in itself would suggest the latter. Yet only exegesis of the epistle itself can provide a conclusive answer.

In the exposition which follows I will show that Paul understood the Philippians' partnership for the gospel to involve not only their financial support, but also their own missionizing activity for the extension of the gospel, and that Paul reflects throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18 upon the spread of the gospel through the Christian community. Paul in Philippians is specifically concerned, not only with his own apostolic mission, but with the participation of the Philippians and others in the work of spreading the gospel. As we will see, Paul's focus in Philippians on mission forms a marked contrast to the second temple Jewish sources examined in Part One of this study. However, I will also argue that Paul's exhortation to mission in Philippians, this purportedly least Jewish of his letters, is deeply steeped in the Jewish traditions regarding gentiles and their conversion described in Part One. The Jewish character of Paul's thought

²² Martin (*Philippians* 65), Garland ("Defense" 329-30) and Silva (*Philippians* 46-47) identify this partnership with the Philippians' financial support of Paul; Lightfoot (*Philippians* 83), Hawthorne (*Philippians* 19-20), Capper ("Dispute" 206-207) and Dickson (*Mission-Commitment* 124-129) understand this as the foremost idea in 1:5.

²³ Peterman, *Gift* 99-100; Ellicott, *Philippians* 21; O'Brien, *Philippians* 61-63.

is in fact the key to his understanding of church and mission. As the exposition will show, Paul's letter to the Philippians, although it has been almost entirely ignored in regard to this question in the past, is a document of foundational importance for understanding Paul's conception of the role of his churches in mission, and the relation of this conception to Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion in the second temple period.

4.3 *Philippians 1:12-14: Paul's Imprisonment and the Progress of the Gospel at Rome*

The letter to the Philippians was written from prison (1:7; 1:13; 1:14; 1:17), most likely in Rome (c. 61-62 C.E.).²⁴ Paul was on trial on

²⁴ An Ephesian provenance for the letter has been suggested (e.g. C.R. Bowen, "Are Paul's Prison Letters from Ephesus?" *AJT* 24 [1920] 112-35; A. Deissmann, "Zur ephesischen Gefangenschaft des Apostels Paulus," *Anatolian Studies* [ed. W.H. Buckler and W.M. Calder; Manchester: Manchester University, 1923] 121-27; G.S. Duncan, "A New Setting for Paul's Epistle to the Philippians," *ExpTim* 43 [1931-32] 7-11; idem, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1929]; D.T. Rowlingson, "Paul's Ephesian Imprisonment," *ATR* 32 [1950] 1-7; J. Ferguson, "Philippians, John and the Tradition of Ephesus," *ExpTim* 83 [1971] 85-87; Jewett, "Thanksgiving" 363-64; Schenk, "Forschung" 3290-92; Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 28 [n. 116]). Other scholars have advocated a Caesarean setting (e.g. Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 3-4; 15-16; 40-41; L. Johnson, "The Pauline Letters from Caesarea," *ExpTim* 68 [1957-58] 24-26; J.J. Gunther, *Paul: Messenger and Exile* [Valley Forge: Judson, 1972] 98-120; Hawthorne, *Philippians* xxxvi-xliv). Even a Corinthian origin for the letter has been suggested (S. Dockx, "Lieu et date de l'épître aux Philippiens," *RB* 80 [1973] 230-46). However, the majority of scholars have strongly favored a Roman origin for the letter (cf. C.H. Dodd, *New Testament Studies* [Manchester: Manchester University, 1963] 83-128; C.D. Buchanan, "Epaphroditus' Sickness and the Letter to the Philippians," *EvQ* 36 [1964] 157-66; J. Schmid, *Zeit und Ort der paulinischen Gefangenschaftsbriefe* [Freiburg: Herder, 1931]; B. Reicke, "Caesarea, Rome and the Captivity Letters," *Apostolic History and the Gospels* [ed. W.W. Gasque and R.P. Martin; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970]; O'Brien, *Philippians* 19-26; many others). Only a Roman imprisonment fits the most natural understanding of the *praetorium* (ἐν ὄλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ, 1:13) and members of the imperial service (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας, 4:22) mentioned in the letter, as well as the impending and final nature of the decision upcoming in Paul's case (1:19-26; 2:23). There is no evidence that a procursular headquarters of a senatorial province such as Asia was ever termed a *praetorium* (cf. F.F. Bruce, *Philippians* [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983] xxii), and the expectation in the letter of a swift and inescapable verdict hardly fits an imprisonment in either Caesarea or Ephesus, where Paul would have retained the option of appeal to Caesar (Schmid, *Zeit* 107). Neither Paul's change in travel plans (2:24; Rom 15:24-28; but cf. Philemon 22; 2 Cor 1:15-2:1), nor the frequency

capital charges, and at the time of writing did not know whether the verdict would be life or death (1:20-24; 2:23).²⁵ The importance of Paul's life or death struggle in prison in behalf of the gospel as the backdrop to the entire letter, while often unappreciated, can hardly be overstated.²⁶ The immediate occasion for the epistle was the return to Philippi of Epaphroditus, who had been sent to convey the gift to Paul (2:25; 4:10; 4:14; 4:18), had subsequently fallen sick and recovered (2:26-27; 2:30), and was now being sent back by the apostle (2:25; 2:28-29). The gift sent through Epaphroditus was but the most recent example in a pattern of generous financial support of Paul's apostolic work, which, although dormant for a time (4:10), had characterized the Philippian congregation from the beginning of Paul's ministry there (4:15-16). This generous support of Paul's mission reflected in turn the unusually warm relationship which existed between Paul and his converts at Philippi (1:4-5; 1:7; 1:8; 2:12a; 4:1; 4:10; cf. Acts 16:14-15). Yet Paul's plans to send Timothy (2:19-23), and to visit Philippi himself (2:24), imply that the Philippians were in need of direction and encouragement, and this need is also indicated by the studied emphasis upon the progress of the

of communication between the Philippians and Paul (4:18; 2:25-30; 2:19), which would have required much less than a year, are serious objections to a Roman provenance; see Stephen Llewelyn, "Sending Letters in the Ancient World: Paul and the Philippians," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995) 337-356. A Roman provenance of the letter was also assumed in the ancient church from at least the second century onward; cf. the so-called Marcionite Prologue to Philippians (*scribens eis a Roma de carcere*), and the ancient hypothesis which prefaces the book in some manuscripts (see J.A. Cramer, *Catena Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum* [Hildesheim: Olms, 1967] 226 [πραιτώριον τὰ βασιλεία τοῦ Νέρωνος καλῶν]). If it is assumed that Paul's confinement began in approximately 60 C.E., the letter would presumably be dated, allowing sufficient time for the situation presupposed by the letter to develop, approximately 61-62 C.E.. This setting will be assumed in the exposition which follows; however, the conclusions of this study are not dependent on a Roman origin for the letter.

²⁵ On Paul's imprisonment and trial, and the possibility of his imminent death, see pp. 205, 210-212 below.

²⁶ As Robin Scroggs notes: "The desperate ambiguity of life or death explicitly permeates the first section of the letter and must infiltrate every topic Paul addresses; however, some commentators seem to think Paul was on a Sunday outing while he wrote" ("Paul the Prisoner: Political Asceticism in the Letter to the Philippians," *Asceticism in the New Testament* [eds. L.E. Vaage and V.L. Wimbush; New York: Routledge, 1999] 187). The confrontation with Roman power implicit in Paul's imprisonment lends added weight to the counter-imperial force of Paul's language in Phil 1-2 (see chapter five below).

Philippians implicit in the thanksgiving period (cf. 1:6; 1:9-11).²⁷ To supply this need was doubtless Paul's main purpose in writing this epistle. Persecution and suffering threatened the young community (1:27-30). The possible inroads of a Judaizing element at Philippi (3:2-6) was clearly another important area of concern.²⁸ Wishing to fortify the courage of the Philippians in their sufferings (2:19) and safeguard them against the spiritual dangers which might threaten them (3:1), Paul wrote this brief epistle.

In 1:12 the conjunction δέ marks the transition from the epistolary thanksgiving to the body of the letter.²⁹ The body is introduced by a so-called "disclosure formula" (γινώσκειν δέ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, ἀδελφοί), a device which can serve as a transitional formula at any point in the letter, but here, as elsewhere, signals specifically the opening of the body of the letter.³⁰ The body-opening in Paul's epistles always serves to introduce some aspect of the subject matter of the letter previously anticipated in the introductory thanksgiving.³¹

Paul discloses to the Philippians that his circumstances have resulted in the greater progress of the gospel (μᾶλλον εἰς προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐλήλυθεν). The expression τὰ κατ' ἐμέ is a general one ("my circumstances"),³² but as the immediate context shows,

²⁷ Cf. Garland, "Defense" 330.

²⁸ Paul's language in 3:1 (ἀσφαλές) suggests that the opponents of 3:2-6 were an actual threat at Philippi (*contra* Stowers, "Friends" 116; Johnson, *Writings* 346). The various forms of opposition mentioned in the letter will be discussed more fully in the course of the exposition.

²⁹ The transitional use of δέ was in fact its original function, and the adversative use only a later development; cf. A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 1183-85. For brief discussion of the epistolary thanksgiving, see pp. 166-169 above.

³⁰ Cf. Terrence Y. Mullins, "Disclosure: A Literary Form in the New Testament," *NovT* 4 (1964) 44-50; Jack. T. Sanders, "The Transition from Opening Epistolary Thanksgiving to Body in the Letters of the Pauline Corpus," *JBL* 81 (1962) 348-62; John L. White, "Ancient Greek Letters," *Graeco-Roman Literature and the New Testament* (SBLSBS 21; ed. David E. Aune; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 99; idem, *Body* 121-22; Doty, *Letters* 34-35. Nine other instances of the formula of disclosure occur in Paul's letters (Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 11:3; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; Gal 1:11; 1 Thess 2:1; 4:13). In Rom 1:13, 2 Cor 1:8, and perhaps also 1 Thess 2:1 and Gal 1:11, this formula, as in Phil 1:12, marks the opening of the letter-body.

³¹ Cf. Doty, *Letters* 34-35.

³² Cf. Col 4:7; Acts 24:22; 25:14; Tob 10:9; 2 Macc 3:40; 15:37; 1 Esd 1:22; 9:17; Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 310; 930; Herodotus 1.31; 1.214; *P. Eleph.* 13.3. In Eph 6:21 the phrase τὰ κατ' ἐμέ is further explained by the addition of τί πράσσω ("how I am faring"). The pronoun ἐμέ is not emphatic, as Schenk thinks (*Philip-*

Paul's imprisonment is uppermost in his mind.³³ The verbal phrase ἔρχεσθαι εἰς expresses result, and the perfect form ἐλήλυθεν emphasizes its abiding character. Paul has already spoken in the thanksgiving period of his imprisonment as a participation in divine grace (1:7), and implicit in the impersonal construction εἰς προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐλήλυθεν is doubtless a reference to God's activity and providential ordering of events.³⁴ As in 1:5, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is a *nomen actionis* referring to the preaching of the gospel. Through the grace of God Paul's imprisonment has resulted, contrary to expectation, in the greater progress of the gospel preaching.³⁵ The divinely-wrought advancement of the gospel proclamation through Paul's imprisonment (cf. Philemon 13, ἐν τοῖς δεσμοῖς τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) is thus the topic of the letter-opening.

Verses 1:13-14 which follow describe the results (ὥστε, 1:13) of this advancement of the gospel preaching.³⁶ Paul's bonds have become manifest everywhere (τοὺς δεσμούς μου φανεροὺς ἐν Χριστῷ γενέσθαι, 1:13a). Paul doubtless understands by τοὺς δεσμούς μου not the mere fact of his incarceration only, but also the cause and character of his bonds as imprisonment in behalf of Christ Jesus (cf. Philemon 1; 9, δέσμιος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). Paul, in chains and on trial for his life, fearlessly proclaims the gospel. Also in his self-description in 1:18b-26, Paul will emphasize his bold proclamation of the word in his imprisonment (1:19-20). The thought in 1:12-13 is that, as a result of Paul's preaching brought about by his bonds (1:12),

perbriefe 129); the longer pronominal forms, although elsewhere emphatic, are the norm and unemphatic with prepositions (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 682).

³³ τὰ κατ' ἐμέ in 1:12 stands in parallelism to οἱ δεσμοί μου in 1:13 and 1:14; cf. 1:7.

³⁴ Cf. Philemon 15; see Silva, *Philippians* 67-68; Eadie, *Philippians* 25-26.

³⁵ μᾶλλον is probably to be taken in an exclusive sense ("rather" or "contrary to expectation"); cf. Roger L. Omanson, "A Note on the Translation of Philippians 1:12," *Bible Translator* 29 (1978) 446-48; O'Brien, *Philippians* 90; Garland, "Defense" 331; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 87; Eadie, *Philippians* 25; Ellicott, *Philippians* 30. For the comparative sense of the adverb ("more"), see Robinson, *Lexicon* 441; Swift, "Theme" 241. The comparative sense would fit well with the stress on increase and growth in the thanksgiving period (1:9, μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον) and elsewhere in the letter (2:12, πολλὰ μᾶλλον; 4:17). Either sense is possible and a confident decision is difficult. Lightfoot (*Philippians* 39 [n. 3]) sees a combination of both senses in Philippians 1:12.

³⁶ As normally in the New Testament and the papyri, ὥστε with the infinitive here indicates actual, not merely intended, result (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 999-1000; 1090-91).

the knowledge of his imprisonment on behalf of Christ has spread throughout the pagan populace at Rome (1:13). In Paul's thinking his sufferings and his proclamation of the message worked together for a missionary purpose.³⁷

The connection of the public knowledge of Paul's bonds to his preaching is also implicit in Paul's choice of the phrase *φανερὸν γίνεσθαι* to describe the spread of this knowledge. This phrase, like the synonymous expressions *γνωστὸν γίνεσθαι* (cf. Acts 1:19; 9:42; 19:17) and *δηλὸν ποιῆσθαι* (cf. Matt 26:73), was by no means a technical expression, and could be used in a wide variety of contexts.³⁸ However, as Ernst Lohmeyer pointed out, *φανερὸς* and its cognates, in Paul and elsewhere in the New Testament, frequently bear connotations of religious revelation.³⁹ More pointedly, these terms are often associated with the spread of the gospel.⁴⁰ The expression *φανερὸν γίνεσθαι* is thus aptly chosen by Paul to describe the knowledge of his bonds which resulted from his speech in behalf of the gospel for which he had been imprisoned (cf. Col 4:4, ἵνα *φανερῶσω* αὐτὸ ὡς δεῖ με *λαλῆσαι*; Eph 6:19-20).

Almost all expositors interpret the phrase *ἐν Χριστῷ* to mean here "for Christ" or "in connection with Christ," and understand the entire construction (*τοὺς δεσμοὺς φανεροὺς ἐν Χριστῷ γενέσθαι*) to mean that "it has become clear . . . that I am in chains for Christ" (NIV).⁴¹ But the construction can hardly bear such a sense, which would rather require *τοὺς δεσμούς μου φανεροὺς γενέσθαι ὅτι ἐν Χριστῷ εἰσιν* (cf. *Ep. Jer.* 51; 69; Plato, *Phaedo* 70 D), or *τοὺς δεσμούς μου φανεροὺς γενέσθαι ὄντας ἐν Χριστῷ* (cf. Herodotus 3.26; 7.18).

³⁷ On Paul's multi-dimensional conception of mission, see the Introduction, pp. 8-9.

³⁸ For the expression *φανερὸν γίνεσθαι* cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 70 D; Josephus, *Ant.* 2.270; 1 Macc 15:9; 2 Macc 1:33; Mk 6:14; Lk 8:17; Acts 7:13; 1 Cor 3:13; 11:19; 14:25.

³⁹ E.g. Rom 1:19; 3:21; 1 Cor 3:13; 4:15; 11:19; 14:25; 2 Cor 3:3; Col 1:26; 1 Pet 1:20; 1 Jn 1:2; 2:19; 4:9; Jn 2:11; 17:6; cf. Lohmeyer, *Philippianer* 39-40.

⁴⁰ 2 Cor 2:14; 4:2; 4:10-11; Col 4:4; Eph 5:13-14; Tit 1:3; Lk 8:17. On the function of *φανερῶ* and cognates within the complex of conversion and mission terminology in 2 Cor 2:14-4:6, see Goodwin, *Living God* 161-189. Passages such as Eph 5:13 reveal an awareness of the etymological relation of *φανερὸς* and related terms to *φῶς* and its cognates.

⁴¹ So e.g. O'Brien, *Philippians* 91-92; Silva, *Philippians* 68; Garland, "Defense" 331-32; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 35; Eadie, *Philippians* 26; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 88; Ellicott, *Philippians* 31.

Moreover, the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ on this interpretation would add little or nothing to the meaning of the clause, for, as noted above, that it had become widely known that Paul was in chains in Christ's behalf is already implicit in his assertion that his bonds had become manifest. The phrase ἐν Χριστῷ does not specify the content of this manifestation, but rather its means: it is through the agency of Christ that Paul's chains have become manifest.⁴² Paul expresses thereby the conviction that Christ is active in his imprisonment for the advancement of the gospel. The advancement of Paul's proclamation of the gospel (1:12), through which his bonds for Christ's sake have everywhere become known, is the work of Christ.

Through Christ the fame of Paul's imprisonment has spread "throughout the whole praetorian guard and to all the others as well" (ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν). Almost all modern commentators who accept a Roman provenance for the letter follow Lightfoot in identifying the πραιτώριον (a Latin loan-word, from *praetorium*) of which Paul speaks with the soldiers of the praetorian guard.⁴³ This sense of the word is well-attested (e.g. *CIL* V.2837; VIII.9391; Suetonius, *Nero* 9; Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.20), and is on balance the most probable interpretation of the term. However, ancient interpreters are unanimous in referring the word to the imperial palace.⁴⁴ This latter sense seems well suited to the context, especially in view of the reference to the imperial staff in 4:22 (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας), and is difficult to exclude entirely.⁴⁵

⁴² For the construction, cf. 1 John 3:10, ἐν τούτῳ φανερά ἐστιν τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ.

⁴³ See Lightfoot, *Philippians* 99-104; Bruce, *Philippians* xxii-xxiii; O'Brien, *Philippians* 92-93; Silva, *Philippians* 70. Earlier writers generally identified the πραιτώριον with the camp of the praetorian soldiers established by Tiberius outside the walls of the city (so J.H. Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [reprinted; Nashville: Broadman, 1977] 534; Robinson, *Lexicon* 613; Ellicott, *Philippians* 31) or with the smaller camp of the imperial guard adjacent to the palace (so Eadie, *Philippians* 27-28).

⁴⁴ Cf. the ancient hypothesis: πραιτώριον τὰ βασιλεία τοῦ Νέρωνος καλῶν (Cramer, *Catenae* 226); so also in Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret.

⁴⁵ While the term is not attested for the imperial residence at Rome (properly παλάτιον, from *palatium*), its wide currency as a general term for a large palace (cf. Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.22.47; Juvenal, *Sat.* 1.75; Suetonius, *Tib.* 39), and especially for seats of government (cf. Juvenal, *Sat.* 10.161; Cicero, *Ver.* 2.133; 4.54; 4.65; 5.30; 5.80; 5.106; 5.160), and in particular for the residence of the governor of

In any case, the people of whom Paul thinks are not other Christians, but outsiders, who have learned of Paul's imprisonment for Christ.⁴⁶ These include not only all the members of the imperial regiment (or palace), but all others as well. Paul stresses the fullness of the extent to which his bonds have been made manifest, by means of an artful concentric structure: (a) ἐν ὅλῳ (b) τῷ πραιτωρίῳ (c) καὶ (b') τοῖς λοιποῖς (a') πᾶσιν. The aorist γενέσθαι similarly emphasizes the full accomplishment of this manifestation.⁴⁷ The effect is to stress the extent to which Paul's imprisonment has furthered his preaching (1:12).

Paul's active mission of verbal proclamation stands out clearly in Philippians 1:12-13. The missionary activity of Paul, in the course of which he founded the Christian community at Philippi (1:5-6; 4:15-16), and for which he has now been imprisoned in Rome (1:7; 1:12; 4:22), is evident here and throughout his letters.⁴⁸ Paul's letters also provide extensive evidence for the missionary activity of other apostles (Gal 2:7-9; 1 Cor 9:5-6; 15:11) and of coworkers of Paul (e.g. Rom 16:3-16; 1 Cor 16:10-12; 2 Cor 1:19; 1 Thess 1:1; 3:2; Phil 23-24). The New Testament epistolary literature also provides clear evidence for the existence, in addition to Paul, his co-workers and other apostles, of a wider group of missionary proclaimers as well.⁴⁹ The existence of such traveling and local missionaries is

imperial provinces (*ILS* 2298; Acts 23:35; Mk 15:16) would make such a usage not unnatural, at least for Paul. So *LSJ* 1458.

⁴⁶ This is universally recognized; cf. Martin, *Philippians* 71-72; Silva, *Philippians* 68; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 34-35; Dibelius, *Philippians* 64-65; Lohmeyer, *Philippus* 41.

⁴⁷ The verb γίνεσθαι, unlike εἶναι, is never a mere verb of existence, but indicates change from one state or condition to another (cf. J.H.H. Schmidt, *Synonymik der griechischen Sprache* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1878] 2.530-32). γίνεσθαι in the aorist accordingly normally points to the achievement of the action under consideration (effective or resultant aorist); cf. 1 Thess 1:7; 1 Macc 15:9; Acts 26:29; 27:29; Matt 24:32; Lk 1:20.

⁴⁸ E.g. Rom 15:18-21; Gal 1:15-16; 1 Thess 1:5, 9-10; 2:1-2; cf. Rom 1:13-15; 1 Cor 1:17; 2:1; 16:5-9; 2 Cor 1:19; 2:12; 10:14-16; 11:23-33; Gal 2:2; 2:7-9; 4:13; 1 Thess 2:13; Phil 13.

⁴⁹ See especially 1 Cor 9:14 (τοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλουσιν); 1 Pet 1:12 (ἀνγγέλη ὑμῖν διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισμένων ὑμᾶς); Eph 4:11 (τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς); 2 Tim 4:5 (ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ); Col 1:5-8 (ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρᾶ); 3 Jn 6-8; cf. Rom 16:5b-16; 1 Cor 3:10-15; 16:15-18; 2 Cor 10:14-16. Another group of passages which might seem to provide further evidence are the several instances in which Paul mentions opponents who proclaim the gospel (e.g. Gal 1:8; 2 Cor 2:17; 4:2; 11:4). However, the evidence which these passages provide for such activity

also reflected widely elsewhere in the New Testament, especially in the book of Acts.⁵⁰ The planned, itinerant missionary activity in evidence in Philippians 1:12-13 and throughout our sources for earliest Christianity is extraordinary, and as we saw in chapter one, is without parallel in our sources for Judaism in the second temple period. Against the Jewish background explored in chapter one, the uniqueness of the missionary praxis of early Christianity stands out strikingly.⁵¹

In 1:14 the καὶ serves to introduce the second half of the result clause begun in 1:13, in which Paul describes a second effect of the advancement of the gospel brought about by his imprisonment: through Paul's preaching in his bonds other Christians have received renewed courage to spread the gospel.⁵² With the phrase ἐν κυρίῳ πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου Paul indicates the source of the believers' renewed courage to speak the word. As a result of Paul's imprisonment they are imbued in the Lord with fresh boldness (πεποιθότας).⁵³ The expression ἐν κυρίῳ should be taken with πεποιθότας, and not the

proves upon examination more elusive, for while the figures mentioned may indeed have engaged in missionary activity, the only preaching of which these Pauline passages speak directly is a correcting activity directed toward congregations already founded by Paul. On such activity in antiquity, see pp. 52-54 above.

⁵⁰ Cf. Acts 8:5; 8:12; 8:35; 8:40; 15:35; 21:8; Lk 10:1ff.; 9:60.

⁵¹ Cf. Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* 203-256; Wright, *People of God* 361: "World mission is thus the first and most obvious feature of early Christian praxis."

⁵² By τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν Paul may possibly refer to all "the rest of the brothers" in addition to his own person, the subject of the preceding verse (1:13). This is suggested by Bauer, *WB* 1382 (s.v. πολὺς Π.2.α.γ.) and *BDR* §244 (n. 5). For this usage, cf. 1 Cor 9:19; 2 Cor 2:6; 4:15; 9:2; possibly Josephus, *Ant.* 12.240. However, it is more likely that τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν refers to "the majority of the brothers," in implicit contrast to τινές μὲν ("some") of the following verse (1:15). This is the regular meaning of the articular plural of πλείων in ancient authors; cf. Homer, *Il.* 5.673; Xenophon, *Hell.* 2.3.34; Herodotus 1.1; Josephus, *Ant.* 10.114; *Mart. Pol.* 5.1; Acts 19:32; 27:12; 1 Cor 10:5; 15:6. So the majority of commentators, e.g. Schenk, *Philippierbriefe* 135; O'Brien, *Philippians* 94; Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 42 (n. 1); Ellicot, *Philippians* 32; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 88; Thayer 516.

⁵³ The "full force" of the perfect tense does not, as Peter O'Brien avers, indicate that the participle πεποιθότας "describes a conviction that began in the past and has continuing effects" (*Philippians* 95). Πέποιθα is an example of the so-called "durative perfect," which simply describes an existing state or condition without any reference to a prior action which produced it (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 895 [cf. 881]; *BDR* §341; Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in the New Testament* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1970] 154). Πεποιθότας in 1:14 describes an existing state coincident in time with its associated verb τολμᾶν.

preceding τῶν ἀδελφῶν.⁵⁴ The phrase ἐν κυρίῳ accordingly has, as ἐν Χριστῷ in 1:13, an instrumental force, and identifies the increased courage of the believers as the work of God.⁵⁵ The activity of God in the lives of both Paul and the Philippians for the spread of the gospel was an important theme of the thanksgiving period (1:6, ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐπιτελέσει; 1:7, συγκοινωνοῦς μου τῆς χάριτος; 1:11, καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης τὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and will be a leitmotif of the entire epistle (e.g. 2:13, θεὸς ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν; 4:13, ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμῶντι με; 1:28-29, ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη; 1:19; 3:3; 3:12; 3:15; 4:7; 4:19). The emphatic position of ἐν κυρίῳ in 1:14 strongly emphasizes this element.

The occasion of this assurance in the Lord is expressed by the causal τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου.⁵⁶ In what way did Paul's imprisonment serve to imbue other Christians with confidence? As in 1:13, οἱ δεσμοί μου refers not merely to the fact of Paul's confinement, but to the character and conduct of his imprisonment as a "prisoner for Christ Jesus" (cf. Philemon 1; 9). Despite imprisonment and the threat of death, Paul is fearlessly proclaiming the gospel. Moreover,

⁵⁴ Either alternative is possible grammatically (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 784). The majority of commentators construe ἐν κυρίῳ with the participle (e.g. O'Brien, *Philippians* 94-95; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 35; Garland, "Defense" 332; Silva, *Philippians* 68-69; Ellicott, *Philippians* 32; Eadie, *Philippians* 29; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 88); the alternative view is adopted by Lohmeyer (*Philipper* 42), Dibelius (*Philipper* 65), and Schenk (*Philipperbriefe* 135-36). It is Paul's usage within the context of the letter itself which is ultimately decisive. Confidence (πέποιθα, 1:6; 1:14; 1:25; 2:24; 3:3; 3:4; πεποιθήσις, 3:4) is a leitmotif of the epistle. Of the six instances of these terms elsewhere in the letter, four of them are accompanied either by ἐν κυρίῳ (2:24, πέποιθα δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ) or the Pauline antithesis ἐν σαρκί (3:3, ἐν σαρκί πεποιθότες; 3:4, πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί, πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί). Other verbs expressive of courage and confidence are similarly modified (e.g. 2:19; 4:7; 4:13; cf. 3:1; 4:4; 4:10). In light of this thematic pattern it is evident that ἐν κυρίῳ in 1:14 is to be taken with πεποιθότας.

⁵⁵ Cf. 2 Cor 3:4, πεποιθήσιν...διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ; Josephus, *Ant.* 10.16, ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πεποιθήσις.

⁵⁶ The dative with πέποιθα can be merely transmissive and indicate the object of confidence (i.e. "confident in my bonds"; cf. Philemon 21; Wis 14:29; Sir 3:24); τοῖς δεσμοῖς is taken in this sense by Eadie, *Philippians* 29; Ellicott, *Philippians* 32; Robertson, *Grammar* 540; Thayer, *Lexicon* 498; and BAGD 639. However, Paul would hardly speak of his imprisonment *per se* as an object of confidence, and a causal or instrumental sense of the dative is suggested by the context of the passage, in which Paul is concerned to show how the gospel has been advanced through his imprisonment (cf. 1:12). Rightly O'Brien, *Philippians* 95; Silva, *Philippians* 70; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 35; Schenk, *Philipperbriefe* 136.

as noted above, the element which Paul will especially stress in his self-description in 1:18b-26 is his desire through his bold speech to magnify Christ in his imprisonment (1:19-20). The thought in 1:14 would consequently seem to be that it is the example of Paul's bold preaching in his bonds which has in turn emboldened the Roman Christians. Moved by Paul's example, the Christians at Rome are imitating him in spreading the word of God more fearlessly.

Through the accumulation of terms denoting courage (πεποιθότας, τολμᾶν, ἀφόβως), Paul strongly emphasizes the boldness and fearlessness of the Roman believers.⁵⁷ The comparative adverb περισσοτέρως highlights both the *increase* in courage shown by the believers (in contrast to the positive adverb περισσῶς), and its *amplitude* (in contrast to μᾶλλον).⁵⁸ Paul's language clearly presupposes the presence of some form of danger or personal risk for the believers at Rome, and the particular threat envisaged appears to be connected, not with their adherence to Christianity alone, but with the open proclamation of the Christian message to outsiders. Despite this risk, the majority are venturing more than ever "fearlessly to speak the word of God" (ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν). The adverb ἀφόβως modifies λαλεῖν, and its strongly emphatic position stresses the hazardous nature of this speech, and its fearless character.⁵⁹

The brothers and sisters of whom Paul speaks are said "to speak the word of God" (τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν).⁶⁰ Elsewhere in the

⁵⁷ Lightfoot, *Philippians* 88; Schenk, *Philippenerbriefe* 137; Lohmeyer, *Philippier* 42; O'Brien, *Philippians* 94-96. On τολμάω as connoting the voluntary incursion of danger, see Schmidt, *Synonymik* 3.544, 547, and cf. Ps. Aristotle, *On Virtues and Vices* 1250 b 1. πέποιθα and its cognates are regularly associated with terms expressive of courage; cf. Eph 3:12, τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει; 2 Cor 10:2, τῇ πεποιθήσει ἢ λογίζομαι τολμήσαι. On πεποιθήσις as confidence for speech, see Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism* 45.1-3. Cf. the discussion of the term in Spicq, *Notes* 3.540, 544, 547. On ἀφόβως, see Schmidt, *Synonymik* 3.530.

⁵⁸ Cf. 1 Thess 2:17; Gal 1:14.

⁵⁹ Paul's choice of λαλεῖν rather than λέγειν to refer to this speech is precise, and further stresses the courage involved in speaking. As opposed to λέγειν, which stresses the conceptual content of the words uttered, λαλεῖν rather connotes "the opening of the mouth to speak, as opposed to the remaining silent" (R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* [11 th ed.; London: Kegan Paul, 1890] 286-89). For the distinction between the two words, cf. Acts 18:9, εἶπεν δὲ ὁ κύριος ἐν νυκτὶ δι' ὁράματος τῷ Παύλῳ μὴ φοβοῦ, ἀλλὰ λάλει καὶ μὴ σιωπήσης.

⁶⁰ Many manuscripts omit τοῦ θεοῦ, and most commentators adopt this shorter reading, regarding τοῦ θεοῦ as a scribal expansion (e.g. Lohmeyer, *Philippier* 42-43).

New Testament “to speak the word” never refers to the paraenetic instruction of the Christian community, but instead always, as here, refers to the evangelizing message addressed to unbelievers.⁶¹ The spotlight here upon speaking the word and active outreach is striking in view of the centripetal notion of conversion present in the Jewish documents examined in Part One of this study. The passage is also striking in that it appears to go beyond the evidence, discussed above in Philippians 1:12-13 and widely evident elsewhere in early Christian literature, for missionary activity by apostles, their coworkers, and other missionary proclaimers.⁶² Philippians 1:14 appears to go beyond such evidence, in that the passage describes the spread of the gospel as a *general Christian activity*. The missionizing activity which Paul here describes is not limited to a special class of missionary proclaimers, but is ascribed to “the brothers and sisters” (οἱ ἀδελφοί) generally.

Οἱ ἀδελφοί, like οἱ ἅγιοι, is a general designation referring to all Christians, or (as here) to all Christians in a given locality.⁶³ It has been argued that “the brothers and sisters” has a technical connotation here and in some other New Testament passages, and refers specifically to Christian missionaries.⁶⁴ However, the evidence for this

[n. 6]; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 35; Ellicott, *Philippians* 32; cf. the remarks of Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [London: United Bible Societies, 1975] 611-12). However, there is, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, little or no evidence of a tendency among scribes to add such genitive modifiers to the simpler phrase ὁ λόγος (see Lk 1:2; Gal 6:6; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Tim 4:2; 1 Pet 2:8; 3:1; exceptions only in Acts 8:4 [E] and Col 4:2 [B, L, 614 and 2495]). In the absence of such a tendency there is no cause to reject the fuller reading τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, which has far superior external attestation, being attested by all extant Alexandrian witnesses (א, A, B, 33) with the lone exception of 1739. The only manuscript evidence for the omission of τοῦ θεοῦ prior to the sixth century is provided by the Chester Beatty II papyrus (p46), which is characterized by an extremely free scribal practice, as well as a decided strain of typically “Western” readings. τοῦ θεοῦ is the reading of all modern critical editions, with the exception of NA.26 and NA.27.

⁶¹ Cf. Acts 4:29; 4:31; 8:25; 11:19; 13:46; 14:25; 16:6; 16:32; Heb 13:7. Λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοῦ θεοῦ) is used synonymously with εὐαγγελίζεσθαι in Acts 11:19 (cf. 11:20) and 13:46 (cf. 13:32).

⁶² Cf. above, pp. 177-178.

⁶³ E.g. Acts 10:23; 11:1; 11:12; 11:29; 15:1; 15:3; 15:32; 15:33; 15:36; 15:40; 16:2; 16:40; 18:18; 18:27; 21:7; 21:17; 28:15; 1 Cor 8:12; Eph 6:23; 1 Thess 4:10; 5:26; 5:27.

⁶⁴ So E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (WUNT 18; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1978) 13-17. Ollrog similarly identifies “the brothers

claim is unpersuasive. It is true that οἱ ἀδελφοί can refer to a more restricted group of persons when they are specifically distinguished from other Christians in the context (e.g. Rom 16:14; Phil 4:21; Gal 1:2; Col 4:15; 2 Cor 11:9; 1 Cor 16:20). Such passages are the main evidence appealed to in proof of the thesis that οἱ ἀδελφοί can be a technical term for Christian missionaries.⁶⁵ But the same is true of other undoubtedly general designations such as οἱ ἅγιοι, and in all such cases the precise nature of the restriction is expressly defined within the context. So, for example, in Romans 16:14 τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀδελφούς refers to the Christians connected with those previously named, and is used in a sense precisely equivalent to τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς πάντας ἁγίους in Romans 16:15. In Philippians 4:21 οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἀδελφοί refers to the Christians with Paul at the time of writing, a more restricted group than πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι in Philippians 4:22. The case is analogous in Galatians 1:2, οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ παντες ἀδελφοί, Col 4:15, τοὺς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφούς, and 2 Corinthians 11:9, οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἐλθόντες ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας, to which compare Rom 15:26, τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ. In 1 Corinthians 16:20 οἱ ἀδελφοὶ πάντες is a wider designation than αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας in 16:19. Similarly, Paul's use of the term ἀδελφός with reference to specific coworkers does not function as an official title, but, reflecting the egalitarian character of early Christian missionary language, describes them as fellow believers belonging to the Lord.⁶⁶ Such passages thus hardly warrant the inference that either οἱ ἀδελφοί or οἱ ἅγιοι are technical designations for a special class of Christians or can carry a more restricted sense apart from express contextual factors. Used apart from such delimitations, the term in the context of Philippians 1:12-14 must refer to Christians generally, in 1:12 (ἀδελφοί) to the Christians at Philippi and in 1:14 (τῶν ἀδελφῶν) to the Christians at Rome.⁶⁷

As such the passage is of great interest, for it is almost the sole

and sisters" of Phil 1:14 specifically with Paul's circle of co-workers (*Mitarbeiter* 194-96), and Dickson thinks of authorized local missionaries attached to the church at Rome (*Mission-Commitment* 144-150).

⁶⁵ Cf. Ellis, *Prophecy* 14-15; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 146-148.

⁶⁶ E.g. 1 Cor 1:1; 2:13; 12:18; 16:11-12; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:18-19; 8:22-23; 9:3; 9:5; Phil 2:25; 1 Thess 3:2.

⁶⁷ So all the standard lexica and the vast majority of commentators; see e.g. Bauer-Aland, *WB*, ἀδελφός; Thayer, *Lexicon*, ἀδελφός; Robinson, *Lexicon*, ἀδελφός; O'Brien, *Philippians* 94; Silva, *Philippians* 69.

instance in Paul's letters in which he refers explicitly to missionizing, in the sense of active verbal proclamation, by Christians generally.⁶⁸ The passage is for this very reason also quite curious, for while the scant number of references elsewhere in his letters might indicate a disinterest in such activity on Paul's part, Philippians 1:14 would seem to indicate that such activity was widespread and expected. Significantly, Paul is unsurprised by this activity, which was taking place even before his arrival in the city, and the obligation of Christians to speak the message, even in the face of danger and personal risk, is simply taken for granted.⁶⁹ This agrees with the evidence of Acts, where the expression λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον is also used of the verbal missionizing activity of Christians generally (4:29, λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον σου; 4:31, ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ παρρησίας; 11:19, λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον). Other passages in Acts refer to propagandizing by Christians generally in similar terms (8:4, εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον; 11:20, ἐλάλουν . . . εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν; apparently also 13:49, διεφέρετο δὲ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου). Moreover, it is widely recognized that the rapid growth of the early church was in fact primarily the work, not of missionaries and evangelists, but of the churches themselves through their day to day contacts with outsiders, and this picture of missionizing as a general Christian activity fits with this evidence.⁷⁰

Paul's interest in 1:12-14 in missionizing as a general Christian activity is especially significant when one considers the wider function of these verses within the letter. We have already seen that in the thanksgiving period (1:3-11), in which Paul anticipates the primary topics that will be developed in the epistle, the preeminent element was the Philippians' partnership with Paul for the work of the gospel (1:5, τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; cf. 1:7). Now in the first period of the letter-body (1:12-14), in which Paul generally introduces an aspect of the central theme of the letter to be developed in the body of the epistle, the topic is the progress of the gospel through the joint missionizing activity of Paul and the Roman Christians.

While the element common to both the epistolary thanksgiving

⁶⁸ For the sparse evidence elsewhere in Paul's letters for such activity, see pp. 5-8 above.

⁶⁹ Cf. O'Brien, *Mission* 114-115.

⁷⁰ On the central role of the churches in the growth of the church, see now Reinbold, *Propaganda*.

(1:3-11) and the opening period of the body (1:12-14) is missionizing partnership with Paul for the advancement of the gospel, these passages differ in that the epistolary thanksgiving is concerned with the partnership of the Philippians for the gospel, while the body-opening is concerned with the missionizing activity of the Roman Christians. Why Paul's interest in the activity of Roman Christians in a letter to the Christians at Philippi? It is widely supposed that Paul wrote of affairs at Rome simply to inform the Philippian Christians of events there; it is usually assumed that Paul did so in response to a specific request for information from the Philippians, or because of their "right" as his patrons to learn of the progress of his mission.⁷¹

However, an examination of the repetition of themes occurring in 1:14 elsewhere in the epistle suggests a very different function for this passage within the letter. The emphasis upon the fearlessness and courage of the Roman believers (τολμᾶν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν) will be echoed in 1:28 (καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενί) and again in 2:19 (ἵνα καὶ ἐν ψυχῇ).⁷² As we saw, ἐν κυρίῳ in 1:14 accents the activity of God in the Roman Christians for the spread of the word, and this theme will be re-echoed in 1:28-29b (καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ· ὅτι ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη; cf. 1:7, τῆς χάριτος) and 2:13 (θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν; cf. 1:6, ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργον ἀγαθόν; 1:11). The comparative adverb περισσοτέρως highlights, as we saw, the progress of the believers at Rome, and this theme, too, is echoed elsewhere; see 1:6 (ὁ ἐναρξάμενος . . . ἐπιτελεσει); 1:9 (ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον περισσεύη); 1:25 (εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς

⁷¹ Cf. Schenk, *Philippenerbriefe* 130; Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 196 (n. 168); Silva, *Philippians* 66.

⁷² Although it is generally ignored by translators, the adjunctive καὶ in the latter passage (2:19) is extremely significant. The clause ἵνα καὶ ἐν ψυχῇ ("that I too may have courage") means "I as well as you (Philippians)," and implies that a major purpose of the portion of the letter which precedes (1:12-2:18) is to increase the courage of the Philippians. The verb ἐνψυχέω and cognates hardly means merely to "be glad" or to "be encouraged" (so, wrongly, Bauer-Aland, *WB* 666; O'Brien, *Philippians* 317-18; Martin, *Philippians* 117; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 109) but rather always means to take courage in the face of dangers or difficulties; cf. Thucydides 6.69 (where it is associated with ἀνδρία); 2.87 (associated with τολμή and ἀνδρία); 2 Macc 14:18 (with ἀνδραγαθία and ἀγών); 4 Macc 6:11; 9:23 (with ἀγών); 1 Macc 9:14; 2 Macc 7:20; Ps. Aristotle, *On Virtues and Vices* 1250 b 5-7 (associated with ἀνδρεία and εὐτολμία); Josephus, *Ant.* 11.241; Hermas, *Vis.* 1.3.2; *P. Oxy.* 1.115. See the discussion in Schmidt, *Synonymik* 3.544-45; cf. Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 106 (n. 2).

πίστεως); 2:2 (πληρώσατε μου τὴν χαράν); 2:12 (πολλῷ μᾶλλον); and 4:17 (τὸν καρπὸν τὸν πλεονάζοντα). All of the important themes touched upon in 1:14 thus reappear repeatedly in portions of the letter which function to exhort the readers of the epistle. Moreover, the entire section 1:12-26, as we will see, has a hortatory function within the letter. This would indicate that the function of 1:12-14 is not apologetic, but rather paradigmatic and paraenetic: the Roman Christians, in speaking the word of God even more courageously as a result of Paul's bold proclamation of the word in his imprisonment, function as a model for the Philippians of partnership with Paul for the extension of the gospel (cf. 1:5!). Like the Romans, the Christians at Philippi are, despite opposition, fearlessly to spread the gospel. The paraenetic context of 1:12-14 is extremely significant, for it implies that in Paul's mind the active spread of the message is an essential element of Christian identity.

As we saw previously, the language of the thanksgiving period itself would imply that the Philippians' partnership for the gospel involved more than their financial support of Paul's mission, and this is confirmed by 1:12-14, where Paul is interested in the advancement of the gospel through the direct missionizing activity of the Roman Christians. In view of the central place which missionizing partnership with Paul, both at Philippi and at Rome, holds in the thanksgiving period and the opening of the body of the epistle, it is impossible not to identify this as a central concern of the letter.

The dynamics of 1:12-14 cast an entirely new light upon a neglected and seemingly minor note near the close of the letter (4:22), in which Paul relays greetings from "those of Caesar's retinue" (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας). Some scholars imagine this mention to be motivated merely by a supposed link of special interest between these Christians on the imperial staff and the members of the church at the Roman colony Philippi.⁷³ Other interpreters, correctly perceiving the link between 4:22 (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας) and 1:13 (ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν), have understood the inclusion of these greetings to have an apologetic function, in pointing to members of the imperial service converted by Paul during his imprisonment.⁷⁴ But in light of 1:12-14, are not the Philippians

⁷³ So Martin, *Philippians* 170; O'Brien, *Philippians* 554.

⁷⁴ So Perkins, "Theology" 93; Garland, "Defense" 332.

rather to think of members of the imperial service converted, not alone by Paul, but through the joint mission activity of Paul and the Christians at Rome, who in this activity function as models for the Christians at Philippi? In this case the inclusion of greetings from converts within the imperial household would not have an apologetic function but rather a paraenetic one: by pointing to the converts gained through the missionizing activity of the Roman brethren even within the highest echelons of the empire, Paul seeks to encourage the Philippians in the same activity.

But alongside the positive examples to which Paul points in 1:14, Paul will also point to the negative example of those who indeed engage in mission, but from very different motives. These two contrasting groups will form the subject of the following section, 1:15-18a.

4.4 *Philippians 1:15-18a: Mission and Motives at Rome*

1:15-18a is a carefully structured unit which displays features of parallelism, antithesis, and concentric structuring (chiasm). The very structure of the section, in its repetitious use of synonymous parallelism with reference to the proclamation of Christ (τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν [1:15]; τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν [1:17]; Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται [1:18a]), and its repeated use of antithetic parallelism to refer to the different motives underlying this preaching (τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν/τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν [1:15]; οἱ μὲν ἐξ . . . /οἱ δὲ ἐξ . . . [1:16-17]; εἰδότες . . . /οἰόμενοι . . . [1:16-17]; εἴτε προφάσει εἴτε ἀληθείᾳ [1:18a]), reveals that the theme of the unit is the proclamation of the gospel of Christ, and the motivations of those who proclaim it. The unit's concentric structure (A τινὲς μὲν καὶ B τινὲς δὲ καὶ B' οἱ μὲν A' οἱ δέ), as well as the additional element οὐχ ἄγνῳς (which disturbs the otherwise strictly balanced parallelism), lays the stress in the section upon those who do so from impure motives.

Although a polished and self-contained unit in its own right, 1:15-18a is hardly, as Dibelius thought, an excursus essentially independent of its surrounding context. But precisely how are these verses related to those which precede (1:12-14)? The vast majority of commentators assume that the two groups described in 1:15-18a comprise

“the majority” (οἱ πλείονες) spoken of in 1:14.⁷⁵ Other interpreters, considering it unlikely that Paul could describe the same people as motivated simultaneously by envy, rivalry, self-seeking and hypocrisy (1:15-18a), and by confidence through their relation to the Lord (1:14), propose that τινὲς μὲν (“some”) of 1:15 (cf. οἱ δέ, 1:17) introduces the group excepted from τοὺς πλείονας (“the majority”) of 1:14.⁷⁶ In any case, Paul here, as in 1:14, continues to reflect upon the missionizing activity of Christians emboldened through his example to spread the word of God. However, his shift from the more general term τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν (1:14; cf. Acts 4:29; 4:31; 11:19) to the generally more restricted terms τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν (1:15) and τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν (1:17; cf. Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, 1:18) may indicate that Paul in 1:15-18 is thinking especially of a more narrow group of proclaimers.⁷⁷ To be sure, these and related terms could also be used more widely.⁷⁸ However, in 1:15-18 Paul most likely focuses particular attention, within the wider context of the spread of the gospel by believers generally (1:14), on the work of local missionaries and evangelists at Rome, and their relationship to his imprisonment for the gospel.

The majority of interpreters either ignore or misinterpret the twofold καὶ which follow μὲν and δέ respectively.⁷⁹ The two conjunctions are in fact correlative and contrastive, and serve to heighten the antithesis between the different motivations for preaching.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ E.g. Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 195-96; Martin, *Philippians* 72-73; Schenk, *Philippbriefe* 137-38; Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 44 (n. 1); Hawthorne, *Philippians* 36; O'Brien, *Philippians* 98.

⁷⁶ So Eadie, *Philippians* 30; Ellicott, *Philippians* 32.

⁷⁷ For the frequent, although not exclusive, use of κηρύσσω and καταγγέλλω with reference to such a special class, see Rom 10:15 (πῶς κηρύξωσιν ἂν μὴ ἀποσταλῶσιν); 1 Cor 15:11 (οὕτως κηρύσσομεν, καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεύσατε); 1 Cor 9:14 (τοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον κηρύσσουσιν); cf. Acts 9:20; 19:13; 2 Cor 11:4; 2 Tim 4:2. For the widespread evidence in ancient Christian sources for the activity of missionary proclaimers, see pp. 177-178 above.

⁷⁸ Cf. Mk 1:45; 5:19; 5:20; 7:36; Lk 8:39; 9:60; Ac 8:4; 11:20; Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 11:26; 14:25; 1 Pet 2:9.

⁷⁹ The conjunctions in light of their position cannot possibly connect v. 14 to v. 15 (so, incredibly, Silva, *Philippians* 71; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 36), nor be connected with τινὲς at all (*pace* Schenk, *Philippbriefe* 138; Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 44 [n. 3]; Eadie, *Philippians* 30).

⁸⁰ The correlative καὶ, while in the majority of cases functioning to conjoin complementary items (e.g. Phil 2:13; Acts 2:29; 1 Cor 15:14 [best text]), can serve to set them in contrast (cf. Phil 4:12, οἶδα καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι, οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν; also 1 Cor 1:22).

They might seem superfluous beside μέν and δέ, but are in fact not so: as μέν/δέ function to set the two groups (τινές μέν...τινές δέ) in antithesis, the twofold καί functions to set in contrast their motives (καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν . . . καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν).⁸¹

Paul describes the one group as motivated by (διὰ) envy and contentiousness (φθόνον καὶ ἔριν).⁸² The terms φθόνος and ἔρις are always relational, and describe one's disposition toward others, whether particular persons or the community in general.⁸³ These terms, often found together, as here (cf. *1 Clem.* 3.2; *1 Tim* 6:4; *Rom* 1:29; *Gal* 5:20-21), are frequently associated in early Christian literature with disharmony and divisiveness within the church.⁸⁴ And yet, as we will see, Paul rejoices in the spread of the gospel through their missionizing activity (1:18). The precise nature of the puzzling situation at Rome has long perplexed interpreters. In the most thorough study of the passage to date, Christopher Böttrich combines exegetical analysis with insights from sociological theory to argue persuasively that the conflict at Rome did not involve any difference in the content of the message, but rivalry with Paul on the part of local church leaders concerned to safeguard their own position and influence.⁸⁵ Such a situation would explain why Paul, after describing the spread of the word as a general Christian activity in 1:14, in his discussion of the motivations for mission in 1:15-18 apparently narrows his focus to

⁸¹ For a similar use of correlative καὶ in conjunction with μέν/δέ, cf. Dio Chrysostom 48.14, ἐμοὶ μέλει μὲν καὶ τοῦ καθ' ὑμᾶς, μέλει δὲ καὶ τοῦ κατ' ἐμαυτὸν ("I am not only concerned [μέλει μὲν] for your interests on the one hand [καὶ τοῦ καθ' ὑμᾶς], but I am also concerned [μέλει δὲ] for my interests on the other hand [καὶ τοῦ κατ' ἐμαυτὸν]"); Plotinus, *Enn.* 2.3.13.8-10, τὰ δὲ ἐξωθεν προσιοντα, τὰ μὲν καὶ ἐναντία τῇ φύσεως, τὰ δὲ καὶ πρόσφορα ("But as for the outside influences, some [τὰ μὲν] are on the one hand [καὶ] contrary to the will [of the thing], some [τὰ δὲ] are on the other hand [καὶ] helpful"); Aristotle, *Phys.* 254 A 24, εἴρηται μὲν καὶ πρότερον, εἰπωμεν δὲ καὶ νῦν; *De Anima* 431 A 21, εἴρηται μὲν καὶ πρότερον, λεκτέον δὲ καὶ ὥδε; Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.22.18, δεῖ μὲν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν, δεῖ δὲ καὶ ἐγκέφαλον εἶναι. See also Dio Chrysostom 38.2; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1320 A 24-28.

⁸² For the phrase διὰ φθόνον meaning "motivated by envy" cf. Josephus, *Vit.* 204; *Ap.* 1.222; Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism* Col. 22.a.2-3; *Mt* 27:18; *Mk* 15:10.

⁸³ Schütz, *Anatomy* 161-162.

⁸⁴ Cf. *1 Clem.* 3.2; *1 Tim.* 6:4; *Gal.* 5:20-21; *1 Cor* 1:11; 3:3; *2 Cor* 12:20; *Tit* 3:9; *1 Clem.* 5.5; 6.4; 9.1; 14.2; 46.5; 54.2; Ignatius, *Eph.* 8.1.

⁸⁵ Christopher Böttrich, "Verkündigung aus 'Neid und Rivalität'? Beobachtungen zu Phil 1,12-18," *ZNW* 95 (2004) 84-101.

the preaching activity of missionaries and evangelists at Rome.

The opposite quality to φθόνος is normally εὐνοια ("goodwill") or ἀγάπη ("love"), and one would consequently expect Paul to describe the contrary group with one or the other of these terms.⁸⁶ Paul will in fact describe this group as motivated by love in 1:16a; however, in 1:15b Paul does not use εὐνοια as one would expect, but Paul writes instead that the latter group are motivated by εὐδοκία ("good pleasure"). The vast majority of interpreters explain εὐδοκία in this passage as if it were essentially equivalent in force to εὐνοια, meaning "goodwill," and this appears to fit the context.⁸⁷ The difficulty with this interpretation, however, is that neither in the LXX nor anywhere else in Greek literature does εὐδοκία have the sense "good will" or "benevolence," and the word's etymology and usage in fact would seem to preclude such a meaning.⁸⁸

A possible answer to the difficulty is suggested by the wider context of the passage within Philippians, and of the word's usage elsewhere in Jewish and early Christian literature. As we have seen, Paul in the previous verse (1:14) describes the boldness of Roman Christians to spread the word as divinely motivated (ἐν κυρίῳ πεποιθότας), and the activity of God within believers for the advancement of the gospel was also a central motif of the thanksgiving period (1:6; 1:7; 1:11). The word εὐδοκία, moreover, in the great majority of its occurrences in the LXX and in the New Testament, is used with reference to the divine good pleasure.⁸⁹ There is, to be sure, in the phrase δι'

⁸⁶ On εὐνοια as the opposite of φθόνος, see Plutarch, *De invidia et odio* 536F; Plato, *Leg.* 635B; and cf. Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 8.2.3-4; 9.5.1-4. For the opposition of ἀγάπη or φιλία to φθόνος, cf. *Test. Sim.* 4.7; *Test. Ben.* 8.1; Plutarch, *De invidia et odio* 536F.

⁸⁷ This is the view of Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 28-29 (n.1) ("ein freundlicher, auf das Beste des anderen gerichteter Wille"); Lohmeyer, *Philipper* 44-45 ("Güte der Gesinnung"); Lightfoot, *Philippians* 89; Ellicott, *Philippians* 33; Schütz, *Anatomy* 161; Eadie, *Philippians* 30; Meyer, *Philippians* 37; Dibelius, *Philipper* 66; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 37; Silva, *Philippians* 73; Schenk, *Philipperbriefe* 140. This interpretation is also reflected in virtually all of the New Testament lexica, e.g. Bauer, *WB* 646 ("gute Wille"); Thayer, *Lexicon* 258 ("good-will, kindly intent, benevolence"); Robinson, *Lexicon* 302 ("good-will, kind intent"); Spicq, *Lexicon* 314-15; with the important exception of Schrenk, *TDNT* 2.740-46.

⁸⁸ So, rightly, Schrenk (*TDNT* 2.746), whose study of the word remains the most thorough.

⁸⁹ The word is used with reference to God in 11 of its 15 occurrences in Sirach,

εὐδοκίαν no express reference to God. However, the word רצון, which εὐδοκία renders in the LXX, is often used in the rabbinic literature to refer to the divine good pleasure, without any direct mention of God.⁹⁰ Importantly, the word will recur in the letter in 2:13, again without express mention of God, but there with clear reference, as we will see, to the divine good pleasure. Thus both the immediate context of the passage, as well as the wider usage of the term, suggest that εὐδοκία in Philippians 1:15, while referring primarily to the “eagerness” or “glad purpose” of Christians at Rome to spread the message, also carries overtones of God’s good pleasure at work in this activity.

If εὐδοκία in 1:15 bears connotations of God’s activity, what is the sense of the term in this context? The word when used of God in Jewish literature often denotes God’s gracious good will or purpose.⁹¹ Moreover, in early Christian literature the divine εὐδοκία always connotes God’s gracious purpose to illumine and save his people.⁹² The term is thus associated elsewhere in Paul’s letters with conversion and the preaching of the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 1:21 Paul describes the preaching of the gospel as the working out of God’s *good pleasure* (εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τῆς μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος σῶσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας). Similarly in Galatians 1:15-16, Paul’s conversion and preaching activity among the gentiles are traced to the divine *good pleasure* (εὐδόκησεν...ἀποκαλύψει τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν).⁹³ Thus also here in Philippians 1:15, the mission activity (τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουν) of those who work in concert with Paul is depicted as the result (δι’) of God’s good pleasure or purpose of salvation (εὐδοκίαν) actively at work in them. While the motivation of those who preach the gospel out

in 7 of the 10 occurrences in the rest of the LXX, and in 5 (or perhaps 6) of its 7 occurrences in the New Testament outside Philippians.

⁹⁰ Cf. Schrenk, *TDNT* 2.745.

⁹¹ *Sir* 2:16; 32:14; 33:13; 35:3; 39:18; 41:4; 43:26; 1 *Chr* 16:10; *Test. Ben.* 11.2.

⁹² *Mt* 11:25-27; *Lk* 10:21-22; *Eph* 1:5; 1:9; cf. *Lk* 2:14; 12:32; *Col* 1:19-23.

⁹³ Cf. *Col* 1:19-23, where the preaching of the gospel (1:23, τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὗ ἠκούσατε, τοῦ κηρυχθέντος ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν) is likewise described as the outworking of the divine “good pleasure” (εὐδόκησεν). The Christian proclamation is depicted as the result of the divine εὐδοκία also in *Eph* 1:9-10 (γνωρίσας ἡμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ; cf. 3:2-3; 3:9).

of envy is merely human and fleshly (φθόνος καὶ ἔρις), the impulse of those who engage in mission out of noble motives is from God (εὐδοκία).

In 1:16 Paul continues to reflect upon the motivations of those who preach. The preaching of the second group (οἱ μὲν) is further described as motivated by love (ἐξ ἀγάπης). This love is specifically set in opposition to the spirit of envy and dissension described in 1:15a, as it is elsewhere in Paul, in early Christian literature and in hellenistic sources.⁹⁴ This love, in not being linked to any specific object, connotes not only love for Paul but also the general Christian grace of love (cf. Rom 13:10; Gal 5:6; 5:13-14; 5:22; 1 Cor 8:1; 13:1-13; 16:14; 1 Thess 3:6; 3:12). As such this motive of love, like εὐδοκία of 1:15b, and unlike φθόνος καὶ ἔρις in 1:15a, is divine in its origin (cf. Gal 5:22; 1 Thess 3:12; 4:9; also Gal 5:6).

The preaching of the friends is also described as motivated by knowledge (εἰδότες).⁹⁵ They know that Paul has been appointed for the defense of the gospel (ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κείμει, 1:16). What is the ἀπολογία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου to which Paul refers? The term ἀπολογία could often bear legal connotations, and in speaking of his ἀπολογία in the context of his imprisonment (cf. 1:7), Paul may perhaps allude to his legal defense against the charges brought against him.⁹⁶ It is often thought that this technical legal sense exhausts the significance of the term here.⁹⁷ However, the word could often have a more general sense, and refer to a more informal defense or reply to accusations.⁹⁸ The term was used in this more comprehensive sense by both Jews and Christians to refer to their defense of the faith in reply to pagan objections and attacks (apologetic).⁹⁹ It is the latter sense in which Paul employs the word

⁹⁴ Cf. Gal 5:14-15, where ἀγάπη is specifically opposed to an attitude of envy and strife. Similarly, ἀγάπη is contrasted with φθόνος in *Test. Sim.* 4.7 and *Test. Ben.* 8.1. Φιλία is contrasted to φθόνος in Plutarch, *De invidia et odio* 536F.

⁹⁵ The circumstantial participle of οἶδα in Paul always indicates the motive or basis for the action of the associated verb; cf. Rom 5:3; 6:9; 13:11; 1 Cor 15:59; 2 Cor 1:7; 4:14; 5:6; 5:11; Gal 2:16; 4:8; 1 Thess 1:4.

⁹⁶ For the technical legal sense of ἀπολογία cf. Acts 22:1; 2 Tim 4:16; also Acts 24:10; 26:2; *Mart. Pol.* 10.2.

⁹⁷ Cf. Martin, *Philippians* 67; Collange, *Philippians* 47-48; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 24; Dibelius, *Philippianer* 63; Lohmeyer, *Philippianer* 24 (n. 2).

⁹⁸ E.g. 1 Cor 7:3; 2 Cor 7:11; cf. also Rom 2:15; 2 Cor 2:19.

⁹⁹ E.g. Josephus, *Ap.* 2.147; 1 Pet 3:15. On the development of Jewish and Christian apologetic, see B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (London: SCM, 1961)

here. This is evident in that the expressed object of Paul's defense is not the charges brought against him (cf. Acts 26:2, *περὶ πάντων ὧν ἐγκαλοῦμαι*), but the gospel (*τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*; cf. 1 Pet 3:15, *περὶ τῆς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐλπίδος*).

In the general early Christian understanding, apologetic always has a protreptic aspect, and is intended to corroborate the preached word.¹⁰⁰ Apologetic thus closely reflects the preaching in that what is defended (apologetic) is that which is proclaimed (propaganda).¹⁰¹ The *ἀπολογία* of which Paul speaks here reflects this close relation to mission, in that his defense is not of the faith generally, but specifically of the message which is *proclaimed* (*ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*; cf. 1:7, *τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*).¹⁰² Paul's apologetic has a missionary purpose.

The missionizing character of Paul's *ἀπολογία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* in 1:16 is further evident in his fuller statement of the phrase under consideration in 1:7: *τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* ("the defense and confirmation of the gospel"). It is frequently claimed that *βεβαιώσις*, like *ἀπολογία*, carries a technical legal sense here, and refers to Paul's legal defense and exoneration.¹⁰³ Yet there is in fact no evidence whatsoever for a forensic usage of this term applicable to cases such as Paul's.¹⁰⁴ Paul's usage here is rather illustrated by

251-59; J. Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907); M. Friedlaender, *Geschichte der jüdischen Apologetik* (Amsterdam: Philo, 1903).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Acts 26:1-29; 1 Pet 3:14-15; Justin, *I Apology* 10, 44, 57; *II Apology* 15; Theophilus, *Ad Autolycum* 1.14; *Epistle to Diognetus* 10; Aristides 16-17. The protreptic or missionizing nature of early Christian apologetic distinguishes it from Jewish apologetic, which is not missionizing (cf. Josephus, *Ap.* 2.287-96). See J. Danielou, *Message evangelique et culture hellenistique* (Paris: Desclee, 1961) 11-39; and Leonard Goppelt, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (8th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978) 236-37. See also Balch, *Wives* 108-109, who nevertheless underestimates the importance of this protreptic element in Christian apologetic in the first century (cf. 87-88, 132-35).

¹⁰¹ See Abraham J. Malherbe, "The Apologetic Theology of the *Preaching of Peter*," *Restoration Quarterly* 13 (1970) 205-206.

¹⁰² In Paul *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον* always refers to the missionary message or to the act of proclamation, never to the paraenetic instruction of the Christian community; cf. Schenk, *Philippbriefe* 106, and see p. 166, nn. 7-8 above.

¹⁰³ Cf. H. Schlier, *TDNT* 1.602-603; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 24; Martin, *Philippians* 67; Dibelius, *Philipper* 63; Lohmeyer, *Philipper* 24 (n. 2).

¹⁰⁴ The assertion that *βεβαιώσις* is part of the legal vocabulary relies upon the work of Adolf Deissmann (*Bible Studies* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901] 104-108) and J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan (*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* [London: 1930] 107-108); but the papyrus examples collected by Deissmann and by Moulton

the use of the term in other early Christian sources for corroboration of the truth of the Christian missionary message.¹⁰⁵

Precisely in what way did Paul regard himself as confirming the truth of the gospel in his imprisonment? The presence in 1:7 of one article indicates that the nouns ἀπολογία and βεβαίωσις are linked, and describe two different aspects of the same activity.¹⁰⁶ The dependent genitive (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) is objective, as in 1:16, and applies to both nouns. This would indicate that Paul understood the gospel to be *confirmed* (βεβαίωσις) through his *speech* (ἀπολογία; cf. Eph 6:19-20; Col 4:3-4). The speech contemplated here is not a rational defense of the kerygma which confirms the message by arguments; it is rather, as Paul's self-description in 1:19-20 will show, contemplated as an occasion when Paul, through his fearless proclamation of Christ in the face of persecution, confirms the truth and power of the gospel.

Paul has been divinely commissioned (κεῖμαι) to provide this missionary defense of the gospel.¹⁰⁷ The missionary consciousness which Paul expresses here is evident throughout his letters, and is clearly at the heart of his apostolic self-understanding.¹⁰⁸ This consciousness of a divine commission to preach to the gentiles has, as we saw in Part One of this study, no parallel in Jewish sources of the second temple period. Against this historical background, Paul's consciousness of a missionary vocation to bring the gospel to the gentiles is truly extraordinary.

Recognizing this commission of the apostle, the believers of whom

and Milligan instance only a quasi-legal, commercial usage of the word, to refer to the vendor's *guarantee*, a usage hardly "forensic" in the broader sense and with no real pertinence to Paul's trial.

¹⁰⁵ E.g. Mk 16:20 (τὸν λόγον βεβαιούντος διὰ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων σημείων); Heb 2:3-4; 2 Pet 1:19 (ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον). This Christian use of the term grows out of the usage of the word in the wider hellenistic world for the corroboration (βεβαίωσις) of the truth of claims made in speech (λόγος). Cf. Plutarch, *On the Sign of Socrates* 582E, where Plutarch describes the New Pythagorean philosopher Theanor as ἐργοῖς καλοῖς καλὰ δόγματα βεβαιῶν ("confirming good doctrines by means of good works"); see also Thucydides 1.23; Plato, *Prot.* 338d; Epictetus, *Diss.* 2.18.32; Plato, *Phaedo* 90C. Cf. also *Som.* 1.12, where Philo defines τὰ ἀβέβαια βεβαιοῦται ("things unconfirmed are confirmed") by the parallel expression τὰ ἄπιστα λαμβάνει πίστιν ("things with no believability receive credence").

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 785-89.

¹⁰⁷ On κεῖμαι εἰς with reference to divine appointment, cf. Lk 2:34 (κεῖται εἰς πᾶσι καὶ ἀνάστασιν πολλῶν); 1 Thess 3:3 (εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα).

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. Rom 1:5; 1:14-15; 15:15-16; 1 Cor 1:17; Gal 1:15-16; 2:7-8; 1 Thess 2:4.

Paul speaks in 1:15b-16 work in partnership with him for the advancement of the gospel. Others (οἱ δέ, 1:17), however, proclaim Christ, not in partnership with Paul, but out of selfish interests. Paul portrays the preaching of these persons as motivated by self-seeking (ἐξ ἐριθείας, 1:17).¹⁰⁹ Paul further describes their preaching as intended to cause affliction for him in his imprisonment (οἰόμενοι θλίψιν ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου).¹¹⁰ The charge of seeking to bring affliction upon Paul is often interpreted as a description of the actual avowed aim of the preaching of this opposed segment.¹¹¹ However, Paul specifically describes the conflict at Rome as motivated by selfish interests (1:17) and, if Böttrich's analysis is correct, the conflict revolved around the desire of leaders at Rome to safeguard their status within the church. Why then does Paul refer to his own emotional duress? Elsewhere in his letters Paul describes disobedience and disharmony within his churches as a source of distress or affliction for him (2 Cor 2:3-4; 11:28-29; Gal 4:19). This is part of a larger pattern in Paul's letters, in which the apostle consistently ties his own emotional well-being to the spiritual welfare and obedience of the churches (cf. 1 Thess 2:17-3:10; Gal 4:12-20; 2 Cor 2:1-4; 6:11-7:16). This pattern is particularly evident in Philippians.¹¹² This would suggest that 1:17 is also to be understood in light of this rhetorical pattern, as introducing an emotional appeal serving to highlight the heinousness of the oppo-

¹⁰⁹ Found prior to the New Testament only in Aristotle (*Pol.* 1302B 4; 1303B 14), ἐριθεία is distinct from ἐρις (1:15), both etymologically (derived from ἐριθεύομαι ["work for hire," as in Tob 2:11; cf. *Il.* 18.550]; see Frisk, *Etymologischer Wörterbuch* 1.558) and in usage (cf. 2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20; see Spicq, *Notes* 2.289-90), and denotes self-seeking (cf. Spicq, *Notes* 2.289-90; *MM* 254; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 27-28 [n. 2]) as opposed to seeking the common good (Schenk, *Philippierbriefe* 139).

¹¹⁰ For the construction, cf. Lucian, *de Dea Syria* 18, πένθος ἐγείρει πάση βασιλίῃ ("cause mourning for the whole kingdom"); see Prov 10:12; 15:1; 17:11; Cant. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4. Cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 538.

¹¹¹ E.g. Hawthorne, *Philippians* 37 ("people reacted against Paul himself and thought to hurt him by their preaching"); O'Brien, *Philippians* 105 ("to rub salt into his wounds and so add to the sense of frustration that he might well feel in his restricted situation"); Silva, *Philippians* 72-73. Cf. the older views of T. Hawthorne, who thinks of anti-imperial preachers seeking to foment persecution as the necessary prelude to the parousia ("Philippians 1:12-19. With Special Reference to vv. 15.16.17," *ExpTim* 62 [1950-51] 316-17), and of De Wette, who thinks of attempts to stir up Paul's fellow countrymen in Rome against the apostle (*Philippier* 184).

¹¹² Cf. 1:4, μετὰ χαρᾶς; 1:27, ἵνα...ἀκούω; 2:2, πληρώσατε μου τὴν χαράν; 2:16, εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι; 2:19, ἵνα κἀγὼ εὐψυχῶ; 2:27-28; 4:1, χαρὰ καὶ στεφανός μου; 4:10, ἐχάρην.

nents' actions (cf. 3:18, καὶ κλαίων λέγω). If so, Paul in 1:17b thus describes, not the confessed aim of these leaders, but rather the effect of their factious behavior upon the apostle. In seeking to undermine his missionary work in order to promote their own selfish interests, they are in effect seeking to bring emotional duress upon Paul.

It is significant that only in the case of those with false motives does Paul indicate the design or intent (οἰόμενοι, 1:17) of their missionizing activity. The avowed intent of all early Christian missionizing was understood to be the salvation of those who hear (cf. 1 Cor 10:33, πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἑμαυτοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν; 9:22, τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω). However, Paul claims that the real intent (οἰόμενοι) of the divisive segment is not to bring the message of Christ to the gentiles, as they would claim, but to further their own factious interests. Since the avowed and real design of these proclaimers are not identical, Paul describes them as preaching "in pretence" (προφάσει) and "from impure motives" (οὐχ ἀγνῶς). Those who evangelize from the impulse of divine love have no such ulterior motives, and Paul therefore describes them as preaching "in sincerity" (ἀληθείᾳ).¹¹³

Paul's conclusion is truly extraordinary (1:18a). Whatever the motives, the result of the missionizing activity in Rome described by Paul has in any case been the same: the wider dissemination of the Christian message (ἐν παντὶ τρόπῳ . . . Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται). Thus even the activity of those with impure motives, although calculated¹¹⁴ to undermine Paul's work, has actually resulted in the greater progress of the gospel, and thus has brought Paul, not distress, but joy (ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω). Given the desperate character of Paul's circumstances, the mood of joy which pervades the letter (1:4, 1:18a, 1:18b, 1:25, 2:2, 2:17-18, 2:28, 2:29, 3:1, 4:1, 4:4, 4:10) is striking indeed.¹¹⁵ In 1:18a the ground of Paul's joy is explicitly the spread of the gospel message. Paul in 1:18a thus not only rounds off his reflections on the motives of those who spread the gospel, but brings to a fitting

¹¹³ Cf. Ps. Aristotle, *On Virtues and Vices* 5.7, where ἀλήθεια is paired with ἀπλότης.

¹¹⁴ On οἶομαι as denoting a subjective judgement which, as here, often proves false, see Plato, *Apol.* 41D (οἰόμενοι βλάπτειν) 21D; 22C; *P. Oxy.* VI. 898.24 (οἰομένη ἐκ τούτου δύνασθαι ἐκφυγεῖν ὃ διέπραξεν); and cf. Schmidt, *Synonymik* 1.333-47.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Scroggs, "Asceticism" 188.

climax his focus on the progress of the gospel through his imprisonment begun in 1:12.

What is the larger function of 1:15-18a within the epistle? It is widely supposed that the purpose of the period 1:15-18a is to inform the Philippians about affairs in Rome, and that the section has an apologetic intent.¹¹⁶ However, we saw above that 1:12-14 had a par-aenetic and paradigmatic function within the letter, and this would suggest that 1:15-18a has a similar function. The noteworthy reoccurrence in the hortatory portions of the letter of vocabulary and themes found in 1:15-18a demonstrates that such is in fact the case. In 1:15 the friends are characterized as motivated by God's good pleasure (δι' εὐδοκίαν), and this theme recurs in Paul's direct exhortation to the Philippians.¹¹⁷ The combination of love and knowledge which characterizes the friends (ἐξ ἀγάπης, εἰδότες ὅτι . . . 1:16) is reechoed elsewhere in the letter in Paul's instructions to the Philippians.¹¹⁸ The theme of sincerity (ἀληθεία, 1:18a) and purity (οὐχ ἄγνως, 1:17) recurs frequently in Paul's direct exhortation.¹¹⁹ The self-seeking which characterizes the opposed segment (ἐξ ἐριθείας, 1:17) is also an important concern of the hortatory portions of the letter.¹²⁰ It is evident from the role which the vocabulary and themes of 1:15-18 play in the letter as a whole, that the two contrasting groups in this passage function as positive and negative examples for the Philippians, and that 1:15-18a, as 1:12-14, serves to prepare the way for the direct hortatory material which is to follow. Thus the material in 1:15-18, while providing limited information about the situation in Rome, has been specifically shaped by Paul to address the needs which he perceived to exist at Philippi and which he will address in

¹¹⁶ See Silva, *Philippians* 71; Ollrog, *Mitarbeiter* 194-200; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 36-38 (Caesarea).

¹¹⁷ ὑπὲρ εὐδοκίας, 2:13.

¹¹⁸ καὶ τοῦτο προσεύχομαι, ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ὑμῶν ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον περισσεύῃ ἐν ἐπιγνώσει καὶ πάσῃ αἰσθήσει, 1:9; τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, 2:2; γινώσκετε, 2:22; cf. 4:8-9.

¹¹⁹ εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι, 1:10; ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, 2:15; ἀγνά, 4:8; γηνσίως, 2:20; δοκιμήν, 2:22; γνήσιε, 4:3; ἀληθῆ, 4:8. The close association of ἄγνως (cf. 1:17, οὐχ ἄγνως) and ἀμέμπως (cf. 2:15, ἄμεμπτοι) is evident from their frequent combination in honorific inscriptions (e.g. *OGIS*, τὰς λοιπὰς δὲ φιλοτεμίας τελιάσαντα ἄγνως καὶ ἀμέμπως).

¹²⁰ μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν, 2:3; μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες, 2:4; τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, 2:21.

the letter.¹²¹ Paul appears to address a threat to unity at Philippi, and this will be a major point of concern throughout the letter (e.g. 1:27; 2:2-4; 2:14; 2:21; 4:2-3).

Unfortunately, it is impossible to identify the nature of the disunity at Philippi more closely. Despite extensive study, the precise identity of the opponents in 3:2-21, and their exact relationship to the congregation at Philippi, remain baffling and highly controverted issues.¹²² Moreover, the precise connection, if any, of these opponents in 3:2-21 to the divisive activity described in 1:15-18a and elsewhere in the letter remains equally controversial.¹²³ The precise role of Euodia, Syntyche and the other coworkers of Paul mentioned in 4:2-3 in the dissensions at Philippi is also tantalizingly unclear.¹²⁴ The paraenetic function of 1:12-18, however, shows clearly that, whatever form(s)

¹²¹ So, rightly, Schmithals, *Paul* 75; Demetrius K. Williams, *Enemies of the Cross of Christ: The Terminology of the Cross and Conflict in Philippians* (JSNTSS 223; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 111-113; at least probably in the same direction, Hawthorne, *Philippians* 38; Garland, "Defense" 333. For the device of attributing to others a failing which one wishes to criticize in one's auditors, cf. Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism* Frags 9; 73.1-13; Plutarch, *Quomodo adulator* 70E.

¹²² Many interpreters see all of 3:2-21 as directed against the judaizing faction addressed in 3:2-10 (single front hypothesis). Others regard 3:17-21 as directed against a separate libertinizing tendency (two-front hypothesis). For discussion of the issues involved, see Schenk, "Philippenerbrief in der neueren Forschung" 3294-99; Chris Mearns, "The Identity of Paul's Opponents at Philippi," *NovT* 33 (1987) 194-204; Robert Jewett, "Conflicting Movements in the Early Church as Reflected in Philippians," *NovT* 12 (1970) 362-390; E.P. Sanders, "Paul on the Law, His Opponents, and the Jewish People in Philippians 3 and 2 Corinthians 11," *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity. I. Paul and the Gospels* (ed. Peter Richardson; SCJ 2; Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Laurier, 1986) 75-90; and Joachim Gnllka, "Die antipaulinische Mission in Philippi," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 9 (1965) 258-76. See also H.W. Bateman, "Were the Opponents at Philippi Necessarily Jewish?" *BibSac* 155 (1998) 39-61. The identification of these opponents as miracle-working missionary "divine man" figures (so Jewett, "Conflicting Movements" 364-71; Martin, *Philippians* 73-74) fails to explain why it is judaizing teaching and not a "divine man" theology which is opposed in chapter three of the letter; the reconstruction of propaganda in hellenistic philosophy and religion which it presupposes is, moreover, highly unlikely (see the Introduction). For the suggestion that Paul was countering at Philippi, not a full-fledged judaizing movement, but a tendency toward friendlier relations and closer cooperation with judaizing or anti-Pauline circles, see Silva, *Philippians* 72-73; Eadie, *Philippians* 34-38.

¹²³ Lightfoot, (*Philippians* 88-90), Lohmeyer (*Philipper* 46-47) and De Wette (*Philipper* 185) identify the divisive segment in 1:15-18a with the judaizers; the difficulties with doing so are ably pointed out by Hawthorne (*Philippians* 36-37), Martin (*Philippians* 73) and Böttrich ("Verkündigung").

¹²⁴ On the role of Paul's plea to Euodia and Syntyche within the hortatory aims of the letter, see below p. 222.

it may have taken, disunity at Philippi was a key concern of Paul in writing the epistle. This in turn explains Paul's emphatic stress in the letter upon the Philippians' *partnership* with him for the gospel. The Philippians' partnership with Paul for the spread of the gospel (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5; συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος, 1:7) was, as we saw earlier, the central theme of the thanksgiving period, and, as we shall see, the language of partnership and friendship will recur throughout the letter. Through his paradigmatic portrayal of the Christians at Rome who boldly proclaim the gospel in unity with the apostle, alongside the negative example of those who engage in mission through impure motives, Paul exhorts the Philippians to work for the extension of the gospel in unity with him and with one another.

4.5 Conclusion

Paul's letter to the Philippians reveals an extraordinary interest in the mission of the Christian community. The central element of the epistolary thanksgiving (1:3-11) is the partnership of the Philippians with Paul for the work of the gospel, and the subject of the opening period of the body of the letter (1:12-14) is the progress of the gospel through Paul's preaching in his imprisonment and the missionizing activity of the believers at Rome. Paul's description of the Christians at Rome (1:14) is of great interest, for it is one of the few passages in Paul's letters which present mission, in the sense of active proclamation of the gospel, as a general Christian activity. Moreover, the fearless proclamation of the word by the Roman believers functions in the letter as a model for Paul's converts at Philippi. In Philippians 1:12-14 Paul traces both his own missionary proclamation, and the mission activity of the Christian community, to the power of Christ at work in the spread of the message.

In Philippians 1:15-18a Paul also reveals a concern with the motivations of those who preach the gospel. Paul in this section focuses special attention, within the wider context of the missionizing activity of believers in Rome generally, on the activity in Rome of local missionaries and evangelists. Paul describes some at Rome who proclaim Christ from sincere motives, out of the impulse of divine love and in acknowledgement of Paul's divine commission. Others, however, engage in mission from impure motives, out of rivalry and not in partnership with the apostle. The conflict Paul describes most

likely involved the concern of leaders at Rome to safeguard their status and authority within the church. The two groups described in 1:15-18a function in turn within the wider letter as positive and negative models for the Philippians. This would suggest that Paul was concerned with the threat of disunity at Philippi, although whether or precisely how this was related to the enemies against whom Paul warns the Philippians in 3:2-21 is not clear.

The focus in Philippians 1:12-18a upon verbal proclamation and active mission stands in marked contrast to the Jewish traditions of conversion discussed in Part One of this study. This focus is reflected in the language of mission and preaching which pervades the section (προκοπήν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 1:12; τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν, 1:14; κηρύσσειν, 1:15; ἀπολογία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 1:16; καταγγέλλειν, 1:17; 1:18). The planned, itinerant missionary activity of Paul (1:12-13), the activity of local missionaries and evangelists (1:15-18a), and the active mission of verbal proclamation of the Christian community at Rome (1:14), are all without parallel in the Jewish documents previously considered. Paul's consciousness of a divine commission to preach to the gentiles (1:16) is likewise without parallel in these sources. Paul's accent on the power of God active in the missionizing proclamation is also without equivalent. Against the Jewish background explored in Part One, the uniqueness of the missionary understanding and praxis of early Christianity stands out in striking contrast.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUFFERING AND MISSION IN PHILIPPIANS 1:18B-2:11

5.1 *Introduction*

The accent on mission which pervades Philippians 1:12-18a raises as many questions as it answers. If, as we saw in Part One, there was no prior Jewish mission, what is the explanation for the intense missionary consciousness reflected in Philippians 1:12-18? Moreover, Paul's focus in Philippians 1:12-18 on active verbal mission as a general Christian activity is, in light of his other letters, striking and unexpected. What is the reason for Paul's concern in Philippians with the spread of the message through the Christian community, a topic to which elsewhere in his letters he gives little explicit attention? Paul's emphatic stress in the passage on the activity of Christ in the advancement of the gospel also calls for explanation. To illumine Paul's understanding, it is essential that 1:12-18 be placed within the larger context of Paul's exhortation to the Philippians in 1:12-2:18. This chapter will focus upon Philippians 1:18b-2:11.

5.2 *Philippians 1:18b-20: Mission and Salvation*

Paul through the use of inclusion (προκοπή, 1:12, 25) signals that 1:12-18 is in fact part of a larger unit, 1:12-26. This larger opening unit (1:12-26) consists in turn of two discrete sections (1:12-18a and 1:18b-26), which are neatly divided by the twofold χαίρω in 1:18. The first χαίρω in 1:18a is in the present tense (χαίρω, 1:18a), and is grounded (ἐν τούτῳ, 1:18a) in the missionary results of Paul's imprisonment described in the previous section 1:12-18a. The second χαίρω in 1:18b is in the future tense (ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι, 1:18b), and is grounded (γὰρ, 1:19) in the salvation envisioned in 1:19-26. Thus while the previous section, 1:12-18a, has described the basis for Paul's present joy, the succeeding section, 1:19-26, will describe the ground of Paul's anticipated future rejoicing. This difference in perspective is reflected in the exclusive use of present and perfect tense verbs (1:12; 1:15; 1:16; 1:17; 1:18a) in 1:12-18a, and the almost

exclusive use (alongside present tense verbs of cognition, 1:19; 1:22; 1:23; 1:25) of future tense verbs (1:18b; 1:19; 1:20; 1:22; 1:25) in 1:18b-26.

In the previous section 1:12-18a Paul delineated the positive example of those Roman Christians who spread the word fearlessly in unity with him (1:14; 1:15b-16), and the negative example of those who preached Christ from wrong motives (1:15a; 1:17). Paul in that section also presented his own proclamation and defense of the gospel (1:13; 1:16; cf. 1:7) as an example for believers, leading them to speak the word more boldly (1:14). Yet while Paul in 1:12-18a asserted the paradigmatic character of his conduct in prison, he provided in that section no description of that paradigm. Now in 1:18b-26 Paul provides such a self-description.

That Paul's self-description in this section is paraenetic and exemplary is clear from two striking facts. First, the features of Paul's self-description in 1:18b-26 correspond remarkably to the features of his description of those Christians who missionize from sincere motives in 1:12-18a.¹ Second, the details of Paul's self-description also correspond to themes and vocabulary which will recur in the portions of the letter in which Paul directly exhorts the Philippians.² Paul's paradigmatic self-presentation thus functions, together with the examples adduced in 1:12-18a, to prepare the way for the direct hortatory material which begins in 1:27. The conduct to which he will exhort the Philippians in 1:27-2:18, Paul models in 1:18b-26.

In 1:19 Paul describes the ground (γάρ) of his anticipation of future joy (ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι, 1:18b) as his conviction (οἶδα) that "this for me will result in salvation" (τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν). These words are taken verbatim from Job 13:16 (LXX), and appear to constitute a definite allusion.³ Paul's allusion to Job

¹ Cf. for example the emphasis upon *fearless speech* (ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν, 1:14; ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ, 1:20), the *activity of God* in producing this speech (ἐν κυρίῳ, 1:14; διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:19; μεγαλυνθήσεται [divine passive], 1:20), the motive of *love* (ἐξ ἀγάπης, 1:16; contrast 1:15a and 1:17; cf. 1:22-24), and the motif of *present/past* (περισσότερως, 1:14; ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν, 1:20).

² E.g. fearlessness (1:20; cf. 1:28; 2:19; 2:30); the activity of God (1:19; cf. 1:6; 1:28-29; 2:13); selflessness (1:22-24; cf. 2:3-4; 2:6-7; 2:20; 2:21; 2:30); the motif of present/past (1:20; cf. 1:5; 2:12; 3:15-16; 4:15-16); and key terms such as *ἔργον* (1:22; cf. 1:6; 2:12; 2:13; 2:25; 2:30; 3:2; 3:21); *καρπός* (1:22; cf. 1:11; 4:17); and, especially, *σωτηρία* (1:19; cf. 1:28; 2:12; 3:20). Cf. Williams, *Enemies* 111-113.

³ This is recognized by most interpreters; see especially David M. Hay, "Job and

is skillful, and functions on two levels. First, Paul, imprisoned and facing death for his preaching of the gospel, identifies himself with Job, the paradigmatic righteous sufferer.⁴ But second, Paul's citation is from the Old Greek (LXX) version, not the MT, and thus draws upon the conceptual background of this passage in the LXX, which is very different from the MT. Whereas in the MT Job's assurance of deliverance is grounded in his boldness to argue his case forthrightly in God's presence (Job 13:14b-16), in LXX Job 13:14b-16 the ground (τοῦτο) of Job's assurance of salvation (μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν) is his *fearless speech and reproof before the ruler who seeks to put him to death*.⁵ The similarity of the situation envisaged in LXX Job 13:14b-16 to Paul's own circumstances is remarkable, and suggests that this wider Septuagintal context, in which Job's confidence in deliverance is grounded in his bold speech before the ruler who threatens his life, is tacitly intimated in Paul's citation of Septuagint Job 13:16a. Paul, whose purposes in this section, as we have seen, are hortatory and didactic, thus draws in Job's example alongside his own to encourage the Philippians. The intertextual allusion also functions to highlight Paul's confrontation, through his bold witness to Christ, with Roman power in the person of the emperor Nero. The echo of Job 13:16 thus greatly enriches Paul's paradigmatic self-description in 1:18b-19.

In applying the words of Job to his own situation, Paul implies

the Problem of Doubt in Paul," *Faith and History* (eds. John T. Carroll, Charles H. Cosgrove, and E. Elizabeth Johnson; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990) 219-21; Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven/London: Yale, 1989) 21-24; J. Hugh Michael, "Paul and Job: A Neglected Analogy," *ExpTim* 36 (1924-25) 67-70; Martin, *Philippians* 75; Schenk, *Philippenerbriefe* 145; O'Brien, *Philippians* 108-109. While a few interpreters have doubted whether Paul intended a reference to Job here, the fact that Paul's words correspond exactly to the wording and sequence of LXX Job 13:16, and that the word ἀποβαίνω occurs nowhere else in Paul, strongly suggests that Paul's words reflect a deliberate echo of the passage.

⁴ See e.g. Hays, *Echoes* 21-24; Hay, "Job" 219-21; O'Brien, *Philippians* 108-109; Silva, *Philippians* 77. For Job as the paradigm of righteous suffering in early Christian thought, cf. Ja 5:11.

⁵ LXX Job 13:14b-16 reads: "But I will put my life at risk (ψυχὴν δὲ μου θήσω ἐν χειρὶ); if the ruler (ὁ δυνάστης) slays (κτερώσεται) me, when he has begun to do so, surely I will speak (λαλήσω) and utter reproof before him. And this for me will result in salvation (τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν), for deceit will not enter into his presence." On the connotations of bold speech which the verb λαλέω has in such contexts, see p. 180 (n. 59) above; cf. ψυχὴν δὲ μου θήσω ἐν χειρὶ in 13:14b.

that the ground of his own assurance of salvation is his bold speech in defense of the gospel (cf. 1:7; 1:16). This is made explicit in the following verse, where Paul avers that this assurance is

in accord with (κατά) my expectation and hope,⁶ that in nothing I will be ashamed (αἰσχυνθήσομαι), but that with all bold speech (ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ), now as always, Christ will be magnified (μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός) in my body, whether through life or through death (1:20).

Many expositors understand αἰσχυνθήσομαι to mean that Paul will not be disgraced by the outcome of events.⁷ However, αἰσχύνομαι has this sense nowhere else in the New Testament, and the verb regularly used by Paul and other New Testament writers elsewhere for this idea is καταισχύνω.⁸ Elsewhere in the New Testament αἰσχύνομαι uniformly expresses the subject's own sense of disgrace or humiliation, and means to "be ashamed."⁹ This sense is, moreover, demanded here by the context, in which ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι ("in nothing will I be ashamed") is specifically contrasted with ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ . . . μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός ("with all bold speech . . . Christ will be magnified"). Paul's expectation and hope is that he will not be ashamed of the gospel, but rather that through his bold testimony Christ will be magnified.¹⁰

Paul's earnest expectation is that he will magnify Christ "with all outspoken boldness" (ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ, 1:20). The word παρρησία has very little background in Judaism but plays an important role in the New Testament.¹¹ The word in ancient literature is always connected with boldness or openness in *speech*, and in the New Testa-

⁶ ἀποκαραδοκία and ἐλπίς united by one article express a single attitude under two different aspects (Robertson, *Grammar* 787); ἀποκαραδοκία signifies here not anxious and uncertain longing (*pace* Georg Bertram, "Ἀποκαραδοκία," *ZNW* 49 (1958) 264-70), but rather intense expectation (cf. Rom 8:19, and the definition of John of Damascus [*Migne* 95.504]: ἡ σφόδρα προσδοκία).

⁷ So De Wette, *Philippian* 186; Ellicott, *Philippians* 39; Lohmeyer, *Philippian* 53-54; Schenk, *Philippianbriefe* 147; Silva, *Philippians* 77-78.

⁸ Rom 5:5; 9:33; 10:11; 1 Cor 1:27; 11:4; 11:5; 11:22; 2 Cor 7:4; 9:4; cf. Lk 13:17; 1 Pet 2:6; 3:16.

⁹ Lk 16:3; 2 Cor 10:8; 1 Pet 4:16; 1 Jn 2:28; cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.9.

¹⁰ Cf. Rom 1:16, οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; 2 Tim 1:8, μὴ οὖν ἐπαισχυνθῆς τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ κυρίου; Mk 8:38; Lk 9:26; 1 Pet 4:16. See also Acts 19:17, ἐμεγαλύνετο τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ.

¹¹ W.C. van Unnik, "The Christian's Freedom of Speech in the New Testament," *Sparsa Collecta* (NovTSup 30; eds. C.K. Barrett; A.F.J. Klijn, et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1980) 274-75; 289.

ment it is frequently associated, as here, with the fearless *proclamation* of the gospel.¹² Elsewhere in the New Testament *παρρησία* is also usually connected, as it is here, with the threat of persecution which speaking the word may bring.¹³ The extremity of the threat which confronts Paul is further accented in the words “whether through life or through death” (εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου).¹⁴

In 1 Thessalonians 2:2 Paul associates his *παρρησία* in proclaiming the gospel with the activity of God (ἐπαρρησιασάμεθα ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν λαλῆσαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ; cf. Acts 4:31).¹⁵ Similarly in the Synoptic tradition those who bear witness to Christ before rulers are promised that in their testimony the Holy Spirit will speak through them.¹⁶ The activity of the Spirit in mission is also strongly accented in the present passage, through Paul’s use in 1:20 of the passive *μεγαλυνθήσεται*, which refers implicitly to God’s activity.¹⁷ The role of the Spirit in Paul’s bold proclamation of the message is also emphasized through Paul’s reference in 1:19b to the Philippians’ “petitioning and supplying of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος, 1:20) on his behalf.¹⁸ Paul’s bold testimony to Christ is made possible through

¹² Cf. esp. 1 Thess 2:2; Eph 6:19-20; Acts 4:13; 4:29; 4:31; 9:27; 9:29; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31; and see van Unnik, “Freedom” 279-82.

¹³ Cf. esp. Acts 4:29, 31; 1 Thess 2:2; Eph 6:19-20; and see Albert-Marie Denis, “L’Apôtre Paul, Prophète ‘Messianique’ des Gentils,” *ETL* 33 (1957) 312.

¹⁴ That Paul faced the prospect of imminent death cannot be doubted in light of 1:20-24, 2:23. For further discussion, see pages 210-212 below.

¹⁵ Cf. Ware, “Thessalonians” 129; Denis, “Prophète” 258.

¹⁶ Mt 10:18-20; Mk 13:9-11; Lk 12:11-12; cf. 1 Pet 4:14.

¹⁷ Cf. van Unnik, “Freedom” 278; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 34-35; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 43.

¹⁸ The single article unites the substantives *δεήσεως* and *ἐπιχορηγίας* and indicates that the provision of the Spirit will be the result of the Philippians’ prayer (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 787). It is impossible to apply the genitive *ὑμῶν* only to the first substantive *δεήσεως*, and *τοῦ πνεύματος* only to the second (*pace* many commentators, e.g. Dibelius, *Philippus* 67; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 33; Silva, *Philippians* 79). In the case of substantives linked by a single article, both genitive modifiers positioned between the article and initial noun (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:12, τὴν *ἐαυτοῦ* βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν; Romans 1:20, ἡ τε αἰδιος *αὐτοῦ* δύναμις καὶ θεϊότης) and genitive modifiers immediately following the linked substantives (cf. 1 Peter 2:25, τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον *τῶν* ψυχῶν ὑμῶν; Phil 1:7, τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ καὶ βεβαίωσει *τοῦ* εὐαγγελίου; Lk 14:21; Col 2:22; Phil 4:20) modify both nouns. In constructions such as in 1:19b, where two genitives modify a single noun or two nouns linked by a single article (τῆς *ὑμῶν* δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας *τοῦ* πνεύματος), the genitive which follows the article is uniformly subjective or possessive, while the genitive which immediately follows the substantive(s) is objective

the power of the Spirit, which will be bountifully provided to him through the prayer of the Philippians.¹⁹

In 1:19-20 Paul's intense missionary consciousness, and his active ministry of verbal proclamation, are strikingly evident. The missionary activity of Paul, in evidence in Philippians 1:12-13, 1:16 and 1:19-20, has no parallel in second temple Jewish sources. Paul's stress on the activity of the Spirit at work in his missionary proclamation is also extraordinary. Moreover, as we have seen, Paul's description of his divinely-empowered fearless proclamation of the gospel in 1:19b-20, like the bold speech of the Roman Christians in 1:14, functions in the letter as a model for the Philippians.²⁰ In light of its paradigmatic function, 1:19-20 thus portrays the active spread of the gospel as a general Christian activity, and mission as an essential element of Christian identity. This focus on the mission of the church was also emphatically present, as we saw, in Paul's paradigmatic description of believers at Rome in 1:14-18a. In light of Paul's other letters, his emphasis in Philippians on active verbal mission as a general Christian activity is unusual, and calls for explanation.

Paul is assured that his courageous testimony to Christ will result in his salvation (1:19). What then is the salvation (σωτηρία) which Paul's bold proclamation of the word will bring? Elsewhere in Paul σωτηρία and its cognates always refer to the salvation accomplished for believers through Christ, and usually to Christ's ultimate deliv-

or descriptive (cf. Plato, Rep. 329B, τὰς τῶν οἰκειῶν προπηλακίσεις τοῦ γήρω; Thucydides 3.12, τὴν ἐκείνων μέλλουσιν τῶν εἰς ἡμᾶς δεινῶν; Herodotus 6.2, τὴν Ἰώνων ἡγεμονίην τοῦ πρὸς Δαρείον πολέμου; Phil 2:30, τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα τῆς πρὸς με λειτουργίας). The Spirit is thus the content, not the giver, of this provision (cf. Gal 3:5, ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα). The phrase is thus to be translated "your requesting and supplying of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." The word ἐπιχορηγία suggests the liberal measure in which the Spirit will be supplied (cf. Lightfoot, Galatians 136).

¹⁹ Elsewhere in the New Testament boldness in speaking the word is similarly connected to prayer (Eph 6:19-20; Col 4:3-4; cf. Acts 4:29-31).

²⁰ For the paradigmatic function of Paul's self-description in 1:18b-26 within the letter, see p. 202 above. This paraenetic context also gives a hortatory aspect to Paul's request for prayer in 1:19b-20. In requesting prayer that he magnify Christ boldly in his imprisonment, Paul provides encouragement to pray, and instruction to the Philippians concerning the focus of their prayers (a concern throughout the letter; see 1:4, 1:9, 4:6). A similar didactic function is evident in the requests for prayer in Eph 6:19-20 and Col 4:3-4, which also focus on mission; cf. D.A. Carson, "Paul's Mission and Prayer," *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission* (eds. P. Bolt and M. Thompson; Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 2000) 182.

erance of believers at his second advent.²¹ More importantly still, “salvation” will be a leitmotif of the epistle (1:28; 2:12; 3:20), and in each of the other occurrences in the letter the term refers to the salvation of believers at Christ’s parousia. The σωτηρία of which Paul speaks in 1:19 thus refers to his personal redemption at the advent of Christ.

Paul is assured of his salvation, because of his expectation that, despite the threat of suffering and death, he will boldly magnify Christ in his imprisonment (1:19-20). The sequence of thought in 1:19-20 reflects Paul’s conviction that believers must suffer with Christ in order to share in his glory at his coming (Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 1:3-7; 1 Thess 3:2-4). The conviction that Christ’s followers must boldly confess the gospel despite persecution, suffering and even death pervades the New Testament epistolary literature (e.g. 2 Thess 1:4-7; 2 Tim 1:8; 2:3-12; Heb 10:32-39; 1 Pet 1:6-7; 2:18-25; 3:13-17; 4:12-19). Likewise in the Synoptic tradition, as evident in such passages as the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:31-38; cf. Mt 16:21-28; Lk 9:22-27), the denial of Christ and the gospel in order to preserve one’s life (ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι, Mk 8:35; ὃς γὰρ ἐπαισχυνηθῇ με καὶ τοὺς ἔμοιους λόγους, Mk 8:38) brings eternal destruction (ἀπολέσει αὐτήν, Mk 8:35); by contrast, the bold confession and proclamation of Christ and the gospel at the risk of one’s own life (ὃς δ’ ἂν ἀπολέσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, Mk 8:35) results in eternal salvation (σώσει αὐτήν, Mk 8:35).²² Reflecting this conviction, Paul thus knows (οἶδα, 1:19) that his own bold testimony to Christ and the gospel (ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνηθῆσομαι, ἀλλ’ ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ, ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν, μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός, 1:20) will result in his salvation (τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν, 1:19).

The primitive Christian pattern of thought reflected in Philippians 1:18b-20 is strongly Jewish in character. As we saw in chapter three, the theme of the eschatological vindication of those who suffer in behalf of their God is widespread in second temple Jewish literature.²³ In Paul’s paradigmatic self-description in Philippians 1:18b-20, as in

²¹ For the phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν in this sense elsewhere, cf. Rom 1:16; 10:1; 10:10; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15; Heb 9:28; 11:7; 1 Pet 1:5.

²² Cf. Mt 5:12; 10:16-39; Mk 13:9-13; Lk 12:4-12; 14:25-35; see also Acts 4:18-31; 5:41-42; 14:21-22.

²³ Cf. pp. 115, 120, and 130-131 above.

Jewish texts, this theme has a hortatory function, encouraging the readers to endure persecution and affliction patiently for the sake of their God. What is without parallel, however, in Jewish sources is the striking emphasis, in Philippians 1:19-20 and other early Christian exhortations to suffering, on verbal proclamation, speech and active mission (cf. Mt 10:18-20; Mk 8:35; 13:9-11; Lk 12:11-12; Acts 4:18-20, 29-31; 5:41-42; 2 Tim 1:8; 1 Pet 3:14-15). In early Christian paraenesis, the exhortation to suffering regularly has a missional aspect, and this comes out clearly in Philippians 1:19-20.²⁴

But Paul also adds an interesting twist to this exhortation, for in Philippians 1:19a the direct antecedent of τοῦτο, as of τούτῳ in the previous verse, is not only the preaching of Paul himself, but also the proclamation of Christ by other Christians described in 1:18a (Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται).²⁵ The seeming paradox is in fact the point: as we have seen in 1:12-18a, Paul's apostolic mission does not reach its final goal in his own preaching and the formation of Christian communities; rather, Paul's preaching is extended and completed through the missionizing activity of other Christians in imitation of his example (1:12-14; 1:16). It is thus not only his own bold speech in behalf of Christ (1:13; 1:16; 1:20), but also the wider proclamation of the gospel (Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, 1:18a) resulting from his preaching (1:12-18), which Paul is assured will for him result in salvation (μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν). In tying his salvation not only to his own testimony to Christ but also to the extension of the gospel by other Christians in imitation of his example, Paul provides emphasis to his focus on mission as a general Christian activity, and on this activity as an extension of his apostolic mission.

Paul's expectation of salvation as a result of his bold witness to

²⁴ This missional aspect of suffering is reflected in the distinctive early Christian use, here and elsewhere, of the term παρρησία (see above, pp. 204-206), a word with little background in ancient Judaism but frequent in early Christian sources with reference to boldness to speak the word of Christ despite opposition and suffering (cf. van Unnik, 277-282, and see Acts 4:13; 4:29; 4:31; 14:3, 19:8; 26:26; Eph 6:19-20; 1 Thess 2:2).

²⁵ Rightly J. Hugh Michael, "Two Brief Marginal Notes in the Text of Philippians," *ExpTim* 53 (1923-24) 139; against most commentators, who refer τοῦτο in 1:19 to the conditions of Paul's imprisonment (O'Brien, *Philippians* 109; Schenk, *Philippenerbriefe* 145; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 39; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 32; Lohmeyer, *Philipper* 51; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 91). As Ellicott rightly remarks, "τούτο can only mean the same as τούτῳ, v. 18—the more extended preaching of the gospel of Christ" (*Philippians* 37).

Christ is given a second distinctive twist in 1:18b-26. This is made clear from the structure of the section 1:18b-26, which is framed by a double inclusion (οἶδα ὅτι, 1:19a and 1:25a; τοῦτο, 1:19a and 1:25a). 1:19a and 1:25a are thus set in parallelism and serve to interpret one another:

1:19a: οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν

1:25a: καὶ τοῦτο πεποιθώς οἶδα ὅτι μενῶ καὶ παραμενῶ πάντων ὑμῶν

The σωτηρία of 1:19a is thus enriched and further explained by the μενῶ καὶ παραμενῶ of 1:25a, and this clearly refers to Paul's deliverance from physical death and continued presence with the Philippians.²⁶ Paul is thus assured that his bold defense of the gospel will bring about not only eternal salvation at the advent of Christ, but also his deliverance here and now from death and prison as well.

In what sense does Paul understand his reunion with the Philippians to be related to the salvation envisioned in 1:19? The key to Paul's thinking at this point lies in the paradigmatic character of Paul's self-presentation in 1:18b-26, to which attention has already been drawn. As the prisoner for Christ, as we have seen, Paul is for the Philippians the embodiment of the divine imperative to magnify Christ boldly even in the face of suffering and death (1:19-20); so likewise, when Paul will stand before the Philippians, delivered from death and prison (1:25-26), he will be the palpable demonstration of God's power to fulfill his promise of eternal salvation for those who confess the gospel fearlessly.²⁷ Thus because of Paul's paradigmatic role for the Philippians, he is confident that his testimony to Christ will result not only in his eternal salvation, but also his deliverance from death to rejoin the Philippians.

But precisely how is it that Paul's own testimony to Christ (1:19-20) and the general missionizing activity he has described in 1:12-18a (τοῦτο, 1:19) will result in Paul's release from prison (1:25)? Paul proceeds to explain this more fully in the verses which follow

²⁶ With most ancient commentators (e.g. Chrysostom, Theophylact); *pace* most modern commentators, e.g. Ellicott, *Philippians* 37; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 32; Lohmeyer, *Philippener* 51; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 91; Eadie, *Philippians* 43-44; O'Brien, *Philippians* 110, who see in the word a reference only to Paul's eternal salvation. Silva (*Philippians* 76-79) rightly suggests the presence of both ideas in σωτηρία in 1:19.

²⁷ Cf. Mk 8:35; Lk 9:24; Mt 10:22; Mk 13:13; Rom 10:9-10; Mt 10:39; 16:25; Lk 17:33; Jn 12:25; Rev 12:11.

(1:21-26). To grasp Paul's thinking on this point, we must carefully explore the rich movement of thought within these verses, and the function of this passage within the letter.²⁸

5.3 *Philippians 1:21-26: Consecration to the Gospel*

Paul in 1:20 has expressed his single-minded purpose that Christ be magnified through him, regardless whether he lives or dies (εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου). In 1:21-24 he expands further upon these possibilities. For Paul (ἐμοί is emphatic by position; cf. 3:20, ἡμῶν), true life is nothing other than Christ (τὸ ζῆν Χριστός, 1:21a).²⁹ Death (τὸ ἀποθανεῖν) is therefore a personal gain (κέρδος) for Paul (1:21b), because it means departing the body and being with Christ (τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, 1:23), and that is better by far (πολλῶ γὰρ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον, 1:23).³⁰

Yet continued existence in the body (τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκί, 1:22) will result in increased fruit from his apostolic labor (καρπὸς ἔργου, 1:22). Ἔργον and its cognates are frequently used by Paul with reference to the work of spreading the gospel.³¹ Already in the thanksgiving period Paul has referred to the Philippians' partnership with him for the gospel as an ἔργον ἀγαθόν (1:6), and this and cognate terms will appear throughout the letter with reference to mission, both active

²⁸ A full discussion of these verses and of the various soteriological questions which the pericope raises regarding Paul's conception of an intermediate state prior to the resurrection, is beyond the scope of this study. For discussion of these issues, see especially K. Hanhart, *The Intermediate State in the New Testament* (Franeker: 1966) 184-85; C.J. Vogel, "Reflexions on Phil. I. 23-24," *NovT* 19 (1977) 262-74; D.W. Palmer, "'To Die Is Gain' (Philippians 1.21)," *NovT* 17 (1975) 203-18; and Stefan Schreiber, "Paulus im 'Zwischenzustand': Phil 1.23 und die Ambivalenz des Sterbens als Provokation," *NTS* 49 (2003) 336-359.

²⁹ τὸ ζῆν in 1:21 is not Paul's earthly or natural life (*contra* Palmer, "Gain" 207; Ellicott, *Philippians* 40; De Wette, *Philippus* 187) but τὸ ζῆν in its true sense (rightly Hanhart, *Intermediate State* 183; Dibelius, *Philippus* 57). If natural life was already "Christ" in a full sense, Paul could hardly speak of physical death as "gain."

³⁰ Cf. 2 Cor 5:2-8, and see Vogel, "Reflexions" 264-67, 272-74; Hanhart, *Intermediate State* 184-85; A. Feuillet, "Mort du Christ et Mort du chrétien d'après les épîtres pauliniennes," *RB* 66 (1957) 505-07. Paul regards death as gain not because it will bring release from earthly troubles (*contra* Palmer, "Gain"), but because of the closer union it will bring with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, 1:23). Cf. Samuel Vollenweider, "Die Waagschalen von Leben und Tod: Zum Antiken Hintergrund von Phil 1,21-26," *ZNW* 85 (1994) 110-111.

³¹ E.g. 1 Thess 3:2; Rom 16:3; 16:21; 1 Cor 3:9; 3:13-15; 9:1; 16:10.

proclamation and associated activities (e.g. 2:25; 2:30; 4:3). Paul thus in 1:22 expresses his conviction that his continued existence in the flesh will result in the fruit of further mission activity.³²

Torn between his desire to be with Christ (1:21) and the progress of the gospel (1:22), Paul is therefore hard pressed to decide between the alternatives (συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο) and hardly knows which to choose (καὶ τί αἰρήσομαι οὐ γνωρίζω) (1:23). The halting syntax of 1:21-24 artfully suggests Paul's sense of conflict and hesitation.³³ Because Paul hesitates here between the choice of death or life, many interpreters have concluded that he was unsure of the outcome of his trial.³⁴ Yet, as we have seen, Paul is in fact certain that he will be released and rejoin the Philippians (1:25, καὶ τοῦτο πεποιθὼς οἶδα ὅτι μενῶ καὶ παραμενῶ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν; 2:24, πέποιθα δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ταχέως εὐλεύσομαι).³⁵ The suspense created *within* the inclusion (1:21-24) is resolved at its *close* (1:25-26). Other interpreters have suggested that Paul's use of the language of decision (τί αἰρήσομαι, 1:23) indicates that he had an actual choice in the matter, and in 1:21-24 contemplates the possibility either of suicide, or of courting martyrdom through a refusal to defend himself at his trial.³⁶ Yet whatever Paul's conduct, his acquittal and release, of which he was certain, were not in his hands, but in those of Nero and his officials. That the decision of life or death was not in Paul's control is made emphatically clear in 2:23.

³² So Dibelius, *Philippianer* 68 ("neue Frucht auf dem Missionsfeld"); Martin, *Philippians* 77 ("a prolongation of his missionary service"); O'Brien, *Philippians* 125 ("winning new converts"); Hawthorne, *Philippians* 47 ("his missionary activity").

³³ V. Bartlet, "Philippians 1:22," *ExpTim* 4 (1892-93) 177; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 92.

³⁴ E.g. Hay, "Doubt" 220-21; Dibelius, *Philippianer* 67; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriefe* 32; Lohmeyer, *Philippianer* 51.

³⁵ As Eadie notes, "He could hardly have made a stronger asseveration" (*Philippianer* 67).

³⁶ Arthur J. Droge, "Mori Lucrum: Paul and Ancient Theories of Suicide," *NovT* 30 (1988) 263-86 (suicide); James L. Jaquette, "A Not-so-Noble Death: Figured Speech, Friendship and Suicide in Philippians 1:21-26," *Neotestamentica* 28 (1994) 177-192 (suicide); Craig S. Wansink, *Chained in Christ: The Experience and Rhetoric of Paul's Imprisonments* (JSNTSup 130; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 96-125 (possibly suicide, but more probably courting martyrdom at trial). Rodney R. Reeves ("To Be or Not To Be? That Is Not the Question: Paul's Choice in Philippians 1:22," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 19 [1992] 273-89) argues that the Philippians' gift (4:10-20) was intended as bribery money to secure Paul's release, and that in 1:21-24 Paul explains why he refused to use the gift in this way—but kept the money anyway (288-89)!

But this does raise the question why Paul presents himself as deciding and choosing between alternatives, when he in fact had no choice in the matter, and in any case was certain that God would bring about his release (1:25-26). The answer lies in understanding the function of 1:21-24 within the letter. As we have seen, the entire section 1:18b-26 functions paraenetically to present Paul as a model for the Philippians.³⁷ Paul's presentation in 1:21-24 therefore does not directly reflect Paul's own situation, but his situation as interpreted and presented by him so as to apply to the needs of the Philippians. The chief function of the passage is a pastoral one: "Paul serves as a living paradigm modeling total consecration to the cause of Christ."³⁸ Paul in 1:21-24 presents himself as a model of Christian decision-making, as one who, like Timothy (2:20-22) and Epaphroditus (2:30), subordinates his own interests to those of Christ and the work of the gospel.³⁹ Moreover, Paul's thinking in 1:21-24 models a reversal of values, in which Christ is all and the alternatives of earthly life or death are thus radically relativized.⁴⁰ The language of choice and decision in 1:21-24 reflects this rhetorical and didactic function of the pericope, not an actual choice which Paul could exercise in his own situation. In 1:21-24, Paul models the devotion to Christ and to the spread of the gospel to which he will exhort the Philippians in 1:27-2:18.

As we have seen, Paul in 1:22 presents the results of his anticipated deliverance from prison as the missionary advancement of the

³⁷ See above p. 202.

³⁸ William A. Simmons, "Divine Sovereignty and Existential Anxiety in Paul: Soliloquy and Self-Disclosure in Philippians," *The Spirit and the Mind* (eds. T.L. Cross and E.B. Powery; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000) 123. Cf. N. Clayton Croy, "To Die Is Gain' (Philippians 1:19-26): Does Paul Contemplate Suicide?" *JBL* 122 (2003) 517-531; James L. Jaquette, "Life and Death, *Adiaphora*, and Paul's Rhetorical Strategies," *NovT* 38 (1996) 37-38, 52; Williams, *Enemies* 112-113.

³⁹ Note Paul's pointed contrast between κέρδος in 1:21 and καρπός in 1:22. Paul also models consecration to the cause of Christ in his paradigmatic self-description in 1:12-18a, where, as Peterman notes (*Gift* 108), in recounting "my affairs" (τὰ κατ' ἐμέ, 1:12), Paul provides no personal information but focuses only on the advancement of the gospel. Cf. Paul A. Holloway, "Bona Cogitare: An Epicurean Consolation in Phil 4:8-9," *HTR* 91 (1998) 95; idem, *Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 101-108, and especially 115-116, n. 69.

⁴⁰ This reversal of values is sharpened by Paul's effective use of assonance and alliteration: τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος (1:21).

gospel (καρπὸς ἔργου). One would expect a reference to this labor in 1:24-26, where Paul again describes the effects of his release. It is therefore surprising that in 1:24-26 Paul describes the results of his release as continued ministry *to the Philippians* (δι' ὑμᾶς, 1:24; εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως, 1:25). As Paul Bowers points out, these verses suggest that "Paul equates the prospect of continuing 'fruitful labor' for him in this life not with a new evangelistic outreach but directly with a ministry to the Philippian believers for their 'progress . . . in the faith.'"⁴¹ Such a connection is also indicated by the inclusion προκοπὴν in 1:25, which refers the reader back to προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου in 1:12, and suggests that the progress of the gospel (1:12) and the progress of the Philippians (1:25) are related in Paul's mind.

But in what sense does Paul equate his missionary labor (1:22) and the pastoral care of the Philippians (1:24-26)? A similar question is raised by the surprisingly important place of Paul's nurture of already established churches in his missionary practice.⁴² Clearly for Paul the continued care of his churches is an integral part of his missionary strategy. How then are Paul's missionary calling and the nurture of his churches related in Paul's missionary thinking? Bowers suggests the way they were related is that the firm establishment of churches through pastoral care and nurture was the final step of Paul's evangelistic activity: "Paul's missionary vocation finds its sense of fulfillment in the presence of firmly established churches."⁴³ However, the present passage in Philippians suggests a very different explanation.

The theme of the entire section 1:12-26, as the topic sentence (1:12) shows, is the advancement of the gospel (προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) through Paul's imprisonment. Yet as we have seen, in 1:12-18a the

⁴¹ Paul Bowers, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of the Pauline Mission," *JETS* 30 (1987) 197.

⁴² Although Paul is often portrayed as leaving fledgling churches after the briefest of instructions and rushing on to new mission fields (cf. Green, *Evangelism* 169; Bornkamm, *Paul* 54-55), Paul's actual practice reveals the remarkable amount of attention which Paul and his co-workers devoted to the continuing pastoral care of already formed communities (see J. Knox, "Romans 15:14-33 and Paul's Conception of His Apostolic Mission," *JBL* 88 [1964] 6-7; Bowers, "Fulfilling" 188-190).

⁴³ Bowers, "Fulfilling" 198; cf. 191-96. Similarly David G. Peterson, "Maturity: The Goal of Paul's Mission," *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission* (eds. P. Bolt and M. Thompson; Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000) 185-204.

advancement of the gospel takes place not only through Paul's own preaching of the gospel (1:13, 1:16) but also through the spread of the message by other Christians as a result of his imprisonment (1:14, 1:18). We have also seen that the active verbal mission of the believers in 1:14 and 1:15b-16 functions within the letter as a model for the Philippians, and that in his own self-presentation in 1:19-20 Paul also functions for the Philippians as a model of fearless confession and proclamation of the gospel. This would suggest that Paul understood his continuing pastoral care of the Philippians (1:24-26), not as the culmination of his own mission, but rather as the necessary prerequisite for the missionizing activity of the Philippians as the extension of his own missionary preaching. The progress of the Philippians (τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν, 1:25) is thus related to the progress of the gospel (προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 1:12), in that the former is the precondition of the latter. This explains how Paul can identify his pastoral care of the Philippians (1:25-26) with further fruit of his apostolic missionary activity (1:22). This in turn provides the answer to our question as to how it is that the missionizing activity described in 1:12-18a will eventuate in Paul's release from prison (1:19, 1:25). This is so because the missionizing partnership of the Philippians with Paul (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5) is dependent upon their own progress and joy in faith (1:25; cf. 1:9-11). Thus Paul's release and personal pastoral care of the Philippians will be necessary (ἀναγκαιότερον, 1:24) if the Philippians are to continue and grow in this partnership and fulfill this active missionizing task. Thus both the force of Paul's example (1:21-24), and his understanding of God's purposes in his upcoming release from prison (1:25-26), function to exhort the Philippians to boldly spread the message of the gospel.

Paul indicates that the goal of his renewed presence with his converts is that their boasting may abound in Christ Jesus (ἵνα τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν περισσεύῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, 1:26). This introduces an allusion to Paul's discussion of the threat of judaizing tendencies in 3:2-10 (cf. 3:3, οἱ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), and this suggests that the instruction Paul envisages here will be focused upon this threat. By reasserting in 1:12-26 his role not only as paradigm (1:13-14; 1:19-24), but also as teacher (1:25-26), Paul lays the basis not only for his upcoming visit, but also for the direct exhortation which is to follow (1:27-4:9) in the letter, which must substitute for Paul's personal presence (1:27; 2:12) until his release and reunion

with the Philippians (2:24). Thus just as 1:12-18a, in setting forth Paul's role as paradigm, prepared the way for the actual description of that example in 1:18b-26, so 1:18b-26, in setting forth Paul's role as the teacher of the Philippians, prepares the way for his direct exhortation of them in 1:27-2:18.

5.4 *Philippians 1:27-2:4: The Sign of Salvation*

In 1:12-26 Paul dwelt upon his own witness (1:13; 1:16; 1:19-20) and the witness of others (1:14-18a) as paradigms for the believers at Philippi. Now in 1:27-2:18 he turns directly to the witness of the Philippian community.⁴⁴ In the first imperative of the letter (ἄξιως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, 1:27), Paul's studied choice of the verb πολιτεύεσθε accents the Philippians' existence as members of a community.⁴⁵ This accent is also evident in the intense profusion in 1:27-2:4 of the language of friendship.⁴⁶ In using this language Paul reveals his concern for the unity of the church at Philippi.⁴⁷ As we have also seen, Paul in 1:12-26 reveals an extraordinary interest in mission. This raises the question of how Paul's concentration upon community and intercommunal relationships in 1:27-2:4 is related to his interest in the proclamation of the word.

In 1:5, which introduces the language of friendship in the letter, Paul has already described his relationship with the Philippians specifically as a partnership for the work of the gospel (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ

⁴⁴ The shift is signalled by the change from indicative verbs in 1:12-26 to imperatives in 1:27-2:4, 2:12-18. On 1:27-2:18 as a distinct unit within the letter, see Christof Landmesser, "Der paulinische Imperativ als christologisches Performativ," *Jesus Christus als die Mitte der Schrift* (eds. C. Landmesser, H.-J. Eckstein, H. Lichtenberger; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997) 548-550. The adverb μόνον adds special force to the exhortation in 1:27-2:18; cf. Landmesser, "Imperativ" 554.

⁴⁵ W.A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven and Paul's Letter to the Philippians," *The Future of Early Christianity* (ed. B.A. Pearson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 331; O'Brien, "Gospel" 225; Silva, *Philippians* 90; Landmesser, "Imperativ" 555-558.

⁴⁶ E.g. 1:27, ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μὴ ψυχῇ; 2:2, σύμψυχοι (cf. Aristotle, *EN* 8.1167b; Plutarch, *Quomodo adulator* 65a; Acts 4:32); 2:2, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε; τὸ ἐν φρονούντες (cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 34.20); 2:2, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες (cf. Aristotle, *EN* 8.1158b; 1159b; Plutarch, *Quomodo adulator* 51b); 2:4, μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες (cf. Aristotle, *EN* 1160b). Cf. White, "Morality" 210-11; Stowers, "Friends" 112. Paul's use of friendship language in Philippians is a large topic which is beyond the scope of this study; for literature on the question, see pp. 164-165 (n. 5) above.

⁴⁷ Cf. Stowers, "Friends" 110-113.

ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Similarly in 1:27-30, the concentration of friendship language is conjoined with a striking accent upon the gospel proclamation. In the opening exhortation of the section (ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, 1:27), Paul utilizes a stock item of paraenesis.⁴⁸ However, he modifies it so as to reflect this interest in the proclamation (ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ, “worthily of the gospel of Christ”). The mention of the gospel (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) recalls not only 1:5, but the repeated references to the gospel throughout the first portion of the letter.⁴⁹ In addition, the words τοῦ Χριστοῦ echo the references to the preaching of Christ in 1:15-18a.⁵⁰ Moreover, the phrase τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ which Paul employs here is in Paul never used of the instruction of the Christian community, but always refers to the missionizing proclamation.⁵¹ The opening imperative of the letter thus accents Paul’s interest in a missional purpose of the life and conduct of the community at Philippi as a means of attracting outsiders to the message of Christ.

Similarly, in 1:27b the unity to which Paul exhorts the Philippians is embodied in a united struggle for the faith of the gospel (μῖα ψυχὴ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, “with one soul struggling together in behalf of the faith of the gospel”). The verb συναθροῦντες implies activity fraught with difficulties and dangers, and recalls Paul’s earlier references to his imprisonment for the sake of the gospel.⁵² In 1:30 Paul explicitly describes the Philippians and himself as participants in “the same struggle” (τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα; cf. 4:3, συνήθλησάν μοι). Investigation of the Agon motif in Paul has shown conclusively that Paul understood his apostolic sufferings to have a missionary purpose.⁵³ In depicting the believers at Philippi as involved in the same struggle, Paul thus describes his converts as through their own conflicts and struggles sharing and extending his

⁴⁸ Cf. 1 Thess 2:12, περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ; Col 1:10, περιπατήσαι ἀξίως τοῦ κυρίου; Eph 4:1, ἀξίως περιπατήσαι τῆς κλήσεως; cf. 3 Jn 6, ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ; inscrip. *Perg.* 248, ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ.

⁴⁹ 1:7, τῇ ἀπολογία καὶ βεβαιώσει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; 1:12, προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; 1:16, ἀπολογία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

⁵⁰ τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν, 1:15; τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν, 1:17; Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, 1:18a.

⁵¹ Cf. Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Cor 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Gal 1:7; 1 Thess 3:2.

⁵² 1:7; 1:12-13; 1:16-17; 1:20.

⁵³ Pfitzner, *Agon* 82-129.

apostolic ἀγών for the extension of the gospel.⁵⁴ This is made explicit in 1:27b, where the united struggle of the Philippians is described as “in behalf of the faith of the gospel” (τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου [dative of advantage]; cf. 4:3, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι). The purpose of the struggle which Paul and his converts share is the advancement of the missionizing proclamation. Paul in 1:27 does not describe the Philippians as spreading the message through active verbal mission, but as furthering the message through conduct and sufferings motivated by a missionary purpose.⁵⁵

We have seen that the central element of the thanksgiving period in 1:3-11 was the partnership of the Philippians with Paul for the spread of the gospel, and that the fearless extension of the message by Paul and the believers at Rome described in 1:12-26 function in the letter as models for the Philippians. Now in 1:27, at the beginning of Paul’s practical application of his paradigmatic self-description to the believers at Philippi, Paul exhorts the Philippians to conduct and suffering on behalf of the spread of the gospel. Paul’s focus in Philippians, not only upon his own apostolic mission, but also upon the mission of his converts at Philippi, is striking.⁵⁶

The presence of opposition implied in the verb συναθλεῖν in 1:27 is made explicit in 1:28. The command to be unafraid of the opponents (καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, 1:28a) clearly implies the threat of persecution, and the implication is confirmed by the overt reference to suffering in behalf of Christ (τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν) in 1:29. The presence of such a threat is also implied in 4:5, where Paul’s command τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις (“let your gentleness be known to all people”) introduces an evident allusion to the persecuted righteous figure in Wisdom of Solomon 2:12-5:13, where the wicked express their intention to persecute the righteous child of God “that we may know his gentleness” (ἵνα γνῶμεν τὴν ἐπιεικειαν αὐτοῦ, Wis 2:19). The opponents at Philippi are not identified, but their ability to bring adversity upon the young com-

⁵⁴ Ibid. 116-120; cf. O’Brien, *Mission* 116-118; Peterman, *Gift* 111.

⁵⁵ For the missional purpose of suffering in early Christian thought, see the discussion above (pp. 207-208).

⁵⁶ For Paul’s conception of mission as involving, not only active verbal proclamation, but also conduct and suffering in behalf of the gospel, see the Introduction, pp. 8-9.

munity (1:28, *μὴ πυρρόμενοι*; 1:29, *πάσχειν*; 1:30, *ἀγῶνα*) strongly suggests that they included, or were in a position to influence, the pagan populace of the city.⁵⁷ Although often overlooked by earlier commentators, the threat of persecution from the wider civic community at Philippi, and its importance for Paul's hortatory aims in the letter, is increasingly recognized in current research.⁵⁸

The presence of opposition within the city may suggest a rationale for Paul's studied portrayal of the Philippian community as a *πολίτευμα* or *πολιτεία* in 1:27.⁵⁹ The verb *πολιτεύεσθαι* in its regular usage had specific political and civic connotations, and Paul will directly contrast the Philippians' earthly and heavenly *πολίτευμα* in 3:20.⁶⁰ Moreover, as we saw in Part One, Jewish writers commonly used this term to refer to citizenship in the Jewish nation, and Philo frequently describes the Jewish community in this way, in order to stress the change in national identity which adherence to Judaism involved for gentile converts.⁶¹ Similarly in Philippians, Paul thus employs this traditional Jewish language to describe the Philippian community as an alternative polis in contrast to that earthly Roman city in which the Philippian believers reside (cf. 3:20, *ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ*

⁵⁷ This is also suggested by Paul's identification of his sufferings during his missionary visit to Philippi (*οἷον εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοί*, 1:30; cf. 1 Thess 2:2) and in Rome (*καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί*, 1:30) as "the same struggle" now being undergone by the believers at Philippi (*τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα*, 1:30). Cf. Martin, *Philippians* 83; O'Brien, "Fellowship" 13; Holloway, *Consolation* 41.

⁵⁸ See especially Peter Oakes, "God's Sovereignty over Roman Authorities: A Theme in Philippians," *Rome in the Bible and the Early Church* (ed. Peter Oakes; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002) 126-141; Mikael Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and State: Christians, Jews, and Civic Authorities in 1 Thessalonians, Romans, and Philippians* (CBNT 34; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2001) 210-278; Craig Steven de Vos, *Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationship of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with their Wider Civic Communities* (SBLDS 168; Atlanta: Scholars, 1999) 263-286; Holmstrand, *Markers* 80-144.

⁵⁹ Paul's conscious choice of the verb *πολιτεύεσθε* in 1:27 is evident from parallel expressions (1 Thess 2:12; Col 1:10; Eph 4:10), which employ the more general verb *περιπατεῖν*, and especially from the repetition of the term later in the letter (*ἡμῶν...τὸ πολίτευμα*, 3:20). Cf. Landmesser, "Imperativ" 555-558; Williams, *Enemies* 116-117.

⁶⁰ For the political connotations of *πολιτεύεσθαι*, see Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 239-243; R.R. Brewer, "The Meaning of *Politeuesthai* in Philippians 1:27," *JBL* 73 (1954) 76-83.

⁶¹ See pp. 135-137 above.

πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει).⁶² The counter-imperial overtones of Paul's language are striking.⁶³ In portraying the Philippians as citizens under the lordship of Christ (cf. 3:20b, κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν), Paul thus accents the renunciation of former commitments, including the claims of the Roman colony at Philippi, which response to his preaching involved for his converts, and seeks to bind the Philippians, to himself and to one another, in a united stand in the face of the external opposition within the city. Moreover, in applying this language, which we have seen is common in Philo and elsewhere as a designation for the Jewish nation, to the Christian community at Philippi (1:27, 3:20), Paul depicts the church as the true Israel, a theme which he will develop more fully in the course of the letter (2:14-15; 3:3).⁶⁴

This understanding of the church as the true Israel also underlies Paul's application, noted immediately above, of the persecuted righteous figure of Wisdom to the church at Philippi in 4:5. As we saw in Part One, the righteous one is in Wisdom a collective figure representing the suffering but eschatologically vindicated righteous remnant of the Jewish nation.⁶⁵ In applying this figure to the church at Philippi, Paul not only includes the believers at Philippi in this remnant, but provides the assurance that their sufferings will result in salvation.

The command to be unafraid (μὴ πυρρόμενοι, 1:28) clearly has not a psychological but a social force—the Philippians are to exhibit their courage in the face of the opponents' threats. How are the Philippians to do so? This is clear from the studied focus on courage and fearlessness in the paradigms which Paul has already provided in 1:12-26. In Philippians 1:14 Paul describes the daring fearlessness of the Roman

⁶² Cf. Scroggs, "Political Asceticism" 193; Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 242-243; Oakes, "Sovereignty" 138-139.

⁶³ The relationship of Paul's message and praxis to the claims of the Roman imperial order, a topic long neglected in New Testament scholarship, is a promising focus of current research; see especially the volumes of collected essays edited by Richard A. Horsley, *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1997); *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (FS Krister Stendahl; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2000); and *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2004).

⁶⁴ Cf. Williams, *Enemies* 116-117; E.C. Miller, "Πολιτεύεσθε in Philippians 1:27: Some Philological and Thematic Observations," *JNT* (1982) 82-96.

⁶⁵ See the discussion above, pp. 118-123.

Christians *to speak the word of God* (τολμᾶν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν). In Philippians 1:19-20 Paul accented his unashamed *bold speech* in behalf of the gospel (ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι, ἀλλ' ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός, 1:20), and through allusion to LXX Job 13:16 emphasized his bold testimony to the gospel in defiance of Roman power. Thus clearly in Philippians 1:28, Paul's practical application to the Philippians of the paradigms set forth in 1:12-26, the Philippians, following the example of Paul and of the Christians at Rome, are to display their own fearlessness through their bold confession and proclamation of the gospel in the Roman colony at Philippi. Paul envisions the mission of the Philippians through conduct and suffering (1:27) as complemented by an active mission of verbal proclamation (1:28). In this way the Philippians participate in and extend Paul's missionary ἀγών (συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 1:27b; τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα, 1:30) for the advancement of the gospel (cf. 1:5, τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον).

The Philippians' fearless testimony to the gospel is a proof to the opponents of their destruction, but of the Philippians' salvation (ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, 1:28b).⁶⁶ Paul's reference to the Philippians' salvation recalls the delineation of his own paradigm in 1:19-20, in which Paul's bold speech in behalf of the gospel results in his salvation (εἰς σωτηρίαν, 1:19). Paul's wording also recalls the persecuted righteous figure of Wisdom 2:12-5:13, with whom, as we have seen, Paul identifies his converts in 4:5, and whose persecution and death (Wis 2:12-20) result in the *destruction* of his persecutors (ἀπωλείας, 5:7) but his *salvation* (σωτηρίας, 5:2). Paul's exhortation in 1:27-28, as his own example in 1:19-20, thus involves an implicit warning to the Philippians: the way to salvation involves suffering and affliction on behalf of the gospel message. The theme of the eschatological vindication of those who suffer on behalf of their God is, as we have seen, a key feature of Jewish thought in antiquity.⁶⁷ However, what is strikingly different in Paul's use of this tradition in 1:27-30 is his accent on mission and proclamation.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ This 'salvation' clearly refers, as it does in 1:19, 2:12 and 3:20, to deliverance through Christ at his advent; *contra* Scroggs, "Political Asceticism" 194. Rightly, Landmesser, "Imperativ" 569. Cf. the discussion above, pp. 206-207.

⁶⁷ See pp. 115, 120, and 130-131 above.

⁶⁸ See above, pp. 215-217, 219-220; cf. 207-208.

In 1:12-26, as we have seen, the spread of the gospel through believers is always traced to the activity of God, Christ or the Spirit (1:6, ὁ ἐναρξάμενος; 1:13, ἐν Χριστῷ; 1:14, ἐν κυρίῳ; 1:15, δι' εὐδοκίαν; 1:19, ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος). Here, too, the courageous testimony to Christ of the Philippian believers despite the threat of suffering is explicitly ascribed to God's activity (καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ, 1:28b). Not only the faith of Paul's converts (τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεύειν, 1:29), but also their sharing in Paul's ἀγών of suffering for the extension of the gospel (τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν, 1:29; τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα, 1:30) is, Paul emphasizes, the result of the grace of God given to them (ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, 1:29).⁶⁹

Already in the thanksgiving period Paul had stressed the united partnership of all (1:1, 1:4, 1:7 [twice], 1:8) the Philippians with him for the spread of the gospel. Similarly in 1:27 and 2:1-4, as we have seen, Paul utilizes the language of friendship to accent the unity and inner cohesion to which he calls the community.⁷⁰ Paul's paraenesis in 1:27-28 indicates a close connection between the exhortation to unity and the threat of persecution. As Craig Steven de Vos observes in his study of the situation at Philippi, "conflict and suffering (1:29-30) appear to be the reason for Paul's call to unity and steadfastness in 1:27-28, and also the call to unity in 2:1-5."⁷¹ At the same time, Paul's prohibition of self-seeking (μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν, 2:3) recalls the negative example in 1:15-17 of those who proclaim Christ out of selfish motives (ἐξ ἐριθείας, 1:17). This suggests that the exhortation to unity in 2:1-4 is focused upon the sort of divisive activity against which Paul warns the Philippians by example in 1:15-18a.⁷² The close relationship evident in 1:27-2:4 between the exhortation to unity and the threat of persecution may possibly be explained by reaction within the city to the refusal of Christians at Philippi to participate in worship of the traditional gods and the imperial cult, and the potential protection from persecution which identification with the Jewish community may have offered within this context.⁷³ However, the precise

⁶⁹ The verb ἐχαρίσθη recalls Paul's earlier description of the Philippians as fellow partners with him in God's grace (συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος, 1:7).

⁷⁰ On the friendship language in 1:27 and 2:1-4, see note 46 (p. 215) above.

⁷¹ de Vos, *Conflicts* 265; cf. Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 210-278.

⁷² See the discussion above, pp. 186-198.

⁷³ Cf. Scroggs, "Political Asceticism" 191; de Vos, *Conflicts* 265-286; Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 259-274; Perkins, "Heavenly Politeuma" 98-102. Such a backdrop would explain not only Paul's focus on the judaizing threat in 3:2-11, but also his

situation at Philippi cannot be reconstructed with certainty. What is clear, however, is Paul's concern that the Philippians respond to the threat of persecution with a united struggle for the spread of the gospel. That this is the goal of Paul's paraenesis is also indicated by his direct plea to Euodia and Syntyche in 4:2-3, where Paul specifically connects the exhortation to unity (τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν, 4:2) with their conflict and struggle with him in the work of the gospel (αἵτινες ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι, 4:3; cf. 1:27, συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου).⁷⁴ The goal of the unity to which Paul calls the church at Philippi is the fearless and united confession and proclamation of the gospel despite the threat of suffering (cf. 1:27, μὰ ψυχῇ συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου).

Paul's focus in Philippians on the spread of the gospel through the churches is extraordinary in light of the little explicit attention which he devotes to this topic elsewhere in his letters. Moreover, whereas Paul's letters elsewhere, although revealing the strongly missional character of his churches in his thought, do not contain any command to his converts to disseminate the message, in Philippians 1 Paul's emphatic exhortation to boldly spread the gospel, despite personal risk and suffering, reveals that he understood active verbal mission as an essential aspect of Christian identity. Why, then, Paul's focus on the active spread of the message through his converts only here in Philippians? How is one to explain the lack elsewhere in Paul's letters of any direct exhortation to spread the gospel?

The answer perhaps lies in the threat of persecution posed by the presence of opposition within the city of Philippi. Paul's repeated exhortations to speak the word fearlessly (1:14; 1:19-20; 1:28-30; cf. 4:5) strongly imply that at Philippi the spread of the word involved some form of danger or personal risk, and that this threat had deterred, or might deter, some members of the Philippian community

studied portrayal in the letter of the church as the true Israel (1:27, 2:14-15, 3:20; see the discussion above and in chapter six below).

⁷⁴ Cf. Nils Dahl, "Euodia and Syntyche and Paul's Letter to the Philippians," *The Social World of the First Christians* (FS Wayne Meeks; eds. L. Michael White and D.L. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 3-15; A. Boyd Luter, "Partnership in the Gospel: The Role of Women in the Church at Philippi," *JETS* 39 (1996) 411-420. That the unity to which Paul exhorts the community in 1:27-2:4 is integral to the spread of the gospel is also indicated by Paul's connection of this unity to his own joy (πληρώσατε μου τὴν χαράν, 2:2), the ground of which, both in the thanksgiving period (1:4-5), and in the opening of the body of the letter (1:18a), is the extension of the gospel through the churches.

from actively spreading the gospel. While the details remain speculative, it is clear that Paul's converts at Philippi were experiencing the threat of persecution, and resulting disunity. The reason for Paul's emphatic call in Philippians to a courageous and united witness to the gospel is thus to be sought in the particular situation at Philippi which he addresses in the letter.

In light of the evidence of Philippians, the general lack of exhortation to active verbal mission elsewhere in Paul is doubtless to be similarly explained in view of the particular needs of those communities which Paul felt compelled to address. The evidence, both in Philippians and elsewhere, for widespread mission activity in earliest Christianity, suggests what is perhaps a surprising conclusion: Paul's churches generally needed no direct exhortation to spread the gospel because they were already engaging in this activity. Such an explanation fits with the picture drawn in Acts of the intense missionary fervor of the new movement.⁷⁵ Such an understanding of the matter would also explain passages in Paul's letters such as 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8, where Paul praises the Thessalonians for spreading the word but nowhere in the letter commands them to do so.⁷⁶ The twofold character of the evidence in Paul's epistles regarding the church's mission discussed in the Introduction, in which the strongly missionary purpose of the life, conduct, charity, prayer and worship of his churches in Paul's thought exists alongside the absence of a direct command to speak the message, suggests a shared understanding between Paul and his converts, in which the obligation of believers to share the gospel with outsiders was generally presupposed rather than brought to explicit expression.⁷⁷ In his letter to the church at Philippi, by contrast, where the church's message was in danger of being silenced, Paul emphatically exhorts his converts to speak the word boldly despite personal risk and loss (1:12-14, 1:19-20, 1:27-30). In the Christ hymn which follows (2:5-11), the centerpiece of the epistle, Paul will anchor his call to unity and suffering for the gospel in the example of Christ Jesus.

⁷⁵ Cf. Acts 4:29-31; 6:7; 8:4; 8:5; 8:12; 8:35; 8:40; 9:31; 11:19-20; 12:24; 13:49; 15:35; 16:5; 19:10; 19:20; 21:8.

⁷⁶ See Ware, "Thessalonians."

⁷⁷ O'Brien, *Mission* 53-77; similarly Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 1396-1397.

5.5 *Philippians 2:5-11: The Example of Christ Jesus*

A full analysis of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2:5-11 is a book to itself, and an exegesis of this profound passage is well beyond the limits of this study.⁷⁸ However, two aspects of the hymn are particularly relevant to this study and must receive brief attention. The first involves the interpretation of Scripture which undergirds the passage; the second involves the related question of the function of the hymn within the framework of the letter.

The vocabulary which Paul uses to describe Christ Jesus in this passage has few parallels elsewhere in his letters, and interpreters have traditionally puzzled over the background of this vocabulary in 2:6-11.⁷⁹ Many of the sources suggested (e.g. an Iranian myth of a heavenly redeemer, hellenistic mythology, Gnosticism) are extremely speculative and involve highly implausible historical reconstructions. A number of interpreters, however, have suggested a Jewish background to Philippians 2:6-11, and that the hymn is dependent upon the fourth Servant Song, Isaiah 52:13-53:12, and reflects conscious interpretation of this passage.⁸⁰ The remarkable correspondences

⁷⁸ Even a selective list of the relevant literature is beyond our purposes here; the reader is referred to R.P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians II, 5-11 in Recent Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), and to Schenk, *Forschung* 3304-3313; for more recent studies, see John Reumann's select bibliography in *Pauline Theology, Volume I: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon* (ed. J.M. Bassler; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 281-84, and *Where Christology Began: Essays in Philippians 2* (eds. Ralph P. Martin and Brian J. Dodd; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1998). Other recent studies include Martin Hengel, "Präexistenz bei Paulus?" *Jesus Christus als die Mitte der Schrift* (eds. C. Landmesser, H.-J. Eckstein, and H. Lichtenberger; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997) 479-518; Markus Bockmuehl, "The Form of God (Phil 2:6): Variations on a Theme of Jewish Mysticism," *JTS* 48 (1997) 1-23; Jean J. Kim, "An Asian Interpretation of Philippians 2.6-11," *Escaping Eden: New Feminist Perspectives on the Bible* (eds. H.C. Washington, S.L. Graham, and P. Thimmes; New York: New York University Press, 1999) 104-122; Samuel Vollenweider, "Der 'Raub' der Gottgleichheit," *NTS* 45 (1999) 413-433; Nunzio Capizzi, "Soteriologia in Fil 2:6-11?" *Gregorianum* 81 (2000) 221-248; Morna D. Hooker, "Adam Redivivus: Philippians 2 Once More," *The Old Testament in the New Testament* (JSNTSS 189; ed. Steve Moyise; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) 220-234; L. Floor, "Die Christus-himne in Filippense: soteriologies of eties?" *In die Skriflig* 36 (2002) 91-104; and Adela Yarbro Collins, "Psalms, Philippians 2:6-11, and the Origins of Christology," *Biblical Interpretation* 11 (2003) 361-372.

⁷⁹ For a convenient summary of the various backgrounds which have been suggested, see Martin, *Carmen Christi*.

⁸⁰ See for example L. Cerfaux, "L'hymne au Christ—Serviteur de Dieu (*Phil.*, II, 6-11=*Is.*, LII, 13-LIII, 12)," *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux: Études d'Exégèse et d'Histoire*

between the language which Paul employs of Christ Jesus in 2:6-9 and the language applied to the figure of the suffering Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, indeed strongly suggest that the hymn reflects deliberate exegesis of the Isaianic portrayal of the suffering Servant:

2:6-7 μορφῇ θεοῦ/μορφῇν δούλου (“*form of God/form of a servant*”) Compare Isa 53:2a, לֹא תִצָּר לֵא “no form to him”; Aquila, οὐ μορφῇ αὐτῷ; Isa 53:2b, מִיָּאִשׁ מִצָּר לֵא “no form”; Isa 52:14, מִיָּאִשׁ מִצָּר וְהוּא מִיָּאִשׁ מִצָּר “(so disfigured) above man his form and his form above sons of men”; Aquila, ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων ὄρασις αὐτοῦ καὶ μορφῇ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων⁸¹

2:7 ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων/σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος (“in likeness of *human beings*”/“in form found as a *human being*”) Cf. Isa 52:14, מִיָּאִשׁ מִצָּר וְהוּא מִיָּאִשׁ מִצָּר “(so disfigured) above man his form and his form above sons of men”; Aquila, ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων ὄρασις αὐτοῦ καὶ μορφῇ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων; LXX, ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων

2:7 μορφῇν δούλου (“*form of a servant*”) Cf. Isa 52:13, עַבְדִּי “my servant”; Aquila, δούλος μου; Isa 53:11, עַבְדִּי “my servant”; LXX, δουλεύοντα⁸²

Religieuse, vol. 2 (BETL 6-7; Gembloux: Duculot, 1954) 425-437; Euler, *Verkündigung* 45-48; 101-105; 118; Larsson, *Vorbild* 244-59; Jeremias, “Amnos” 119; Grelot, *Poèmes* 147-148; L. Krinetzki, “Der Einfluss von Is 52,13-53,12 auf Phil 2,6-11,” *ThQ* 139 (1959) 157-93; 291-336; Johnson, “Servant” 131; Guy Wagner, “Le scandale de la croix expliqué par le chant du Serviteur d’Esaïe 53: Réflexion sur Philippiens 2/6-11,” *Études théologiques et religieuses* 61 (1986) 177-187; Robert H. Gundry, “Style and Substance in ‘The Myth of God Incarnate’ according to Philippians 2:6-11,” *Crossing the Boundaries* (FS Michael D. Goulder; eds. Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, and David E. Orton; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 290-293; Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 58-60; idem, “The Worship of Jesus in Philippians 2:5-11,” *Where Christology Began: Essays in Philippians 2* (eds. Ralph P. Martin and Brian J. Dodd; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1998) 135-136.

⁸¹ It is probable that the readings of Aquila in Isa 53:2a and 52:14 reflect an older translational tradition (cf. Euler, *Verkündigung* 106). LXX Isa 53:2 employs εἶδος (twice) in place of μορφῇ, and in 52:14 reads τὸ εἶδος σου καὶ ἡ δόξα σου. The Philippian hymn contains little or no direct allusions to the LXX version of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, and is apparently derived either from a different Greek recension or the original Hebrew text. On the variety of Greek translations of the Hebrew scriptures available besides the Old Greek in antiquity, see above, pp. 96-97, n. 8. For salient criticisms of the overreliance of New Testament scholars on the LXX in determining the source of citations and allusions to the Old Testament in the New Testament, see Rikki E. Watts, “Jesus’ Death, Isaiah 53, and Mark 10:45: A Crux Revisited,” *Jesus and the Suffering Servant* (eds. William H. Bellinger and William R. Farmer; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1998) 126-127, 136-137, 148-150, and, in the same volume, David A. Sapp, “The LXX, IQIsa, and MT Versions of Isaiah 53 and the Christian Doctrine of the Atonement” 170-192.

⁸² The reading of Aquila in 52:13 most likely reflects an earlier Greek recension;

2:7 ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν (“he emptied himself”) Cf. Isa 53:12, נָפְשׁוֹ לְמוֹת הָעֵצָה “he emptied out his soul unto death”⁸³

2:8 ἐταπείνωσεν ἐαυτόν (“he abased himself”) Cf. Isa 53:4, מְעֵנָה “abased”; Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, τεταπεινωμένον; Isa 53:7, נָעַנָּה “abased”;⁸⁴ in LXX Isa 53:8 מְעַצָּר (“by oppression”) is rendered ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ

2:8 μέχρι θανάτου (“unto death”) Cf. Isa 53:12, לְמוֹת “unto death”

2:9 ὑπερύψωσεν αὐτόν (“he highly exalted him”) Cf. Isa 52:13, יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְנִבְּהָ מְאֹד “he will be exalted and lifted up and highly exalted”; cf. also Isa 53:10; 53:12

The number of striking correspondences to the fourth Servant Song within the short space of Philippians 2:6-9 is too great to be accidental, and makes it impossible to resist the conclusion that Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a focus of sustained exegetical reflection in the Christ hymn.

As we saw in Part One, the Servant Songs of Isaiah were a major focus of exegetical reflection in second temple Judaism. Moreover, as we saw, the way in which interpretation of the Servant Songs was expressed in ancient Judaism was, as in Philippians, through the cluster of allusion and echo.⁸⁵ In Philippians 2, not only Paul’s interest in interpretation of the fourth Servant Song, but also the method whereby he expresses this interpretation, is thoroughly Jewish.⁸⁶

see the note immediately preceding. LXX Isaiah 52:13 reads ὁ παῖς μου.

⁸³ The allusion to Isa 53:12 hardly requires that ἐκένωσεν (2:7) be understood to refer to Christ’s death, as Jeremias supposed; within the structure of the hymn ἐκένωσεν must be taken as referring to Christ Jesus being made in human likeness, and ἐταπείνωσεν (2:8) to the crucifixion (cf. O’Brien, *Philippians* 224-228). In Isaiah 53:12 itself נָפְשׁוֹ לְמוֹת הָעֵצָה is a summary description of the entire career of the servant culminating in his death, which the hymn, in applying the passage to Christ Jesus, interprets as a two-stage process of taking the form of a slave and becoming obedient to the point of death on a cross.

⁸⁴ The verb ταπεινῶ is very frequent in the LXX as a translation of the Hebrew verb עָנָה, of which the Hebrew forms in Isa 53:4 and 53:7 are the Pual and Niphal participle respectively. The joint reading of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion almost certainly reflects an older translation; see notes 81 and 82 above.

⁸⁵ See chapter three above, especially pp. 118-123, 125-127, 128-129, 130-131, and 140-141.

⁸⁶ The objection still at times encountered, that if Paul in Philippians 2:6-11 were engaging in interpretation of the suffering Servant Song, he would make this evident through explicit citation rather than allusion and echo, reflects an utter ignorance of Jewish methods of Scripture interpretation in antiquity; see chapter three above.

As we also saw in Part One, the fourth Servant Song was interpreted in a variety of ways in ancient Judaism. The Servant figure in Isaiah 53 is interpreted in Wisdom of Solomon and in Daniel of the suffering and eschatological salvation of the faithful remnant of the Jewish nation. In *Targum Isaiah*, by contrast, the fourth Servant Song is interpreted of the messiah, and his eschatological deliverance of Israel from suffering and exile. In light of this background, the Jewish character of Paul's interpretation of the Song in the Christ hymn is evident. Like *Targum Isaiah*, he interpreted the fourth Song messianically, and, like the targum, Daniel, and Wisdom, he understood the exaltation of the Servant as an eschatological event. However, two key aspects of Paul's interpretation in the Christ hymn are without parallel in second temple Judaism. First, Paul identifies the sufferings and death of the Servant in the fourth Song with the passion and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth (2:6-8). This interpretation of Isaiah 53 in terms of a suffering messiah, as we saw in Part One, has no antecedents in ancient Judaism. Second, although, in continuity with Jewish interpretation, he interprets the fourth Song eschatologically, Paul understands the eschatological exaltation of the Servant already to have taken place in the resurrection and glorification of Jesus of Nazareth (2:9). This sets the interpretation of the fourth Song in the Christ hymn radically apart, for, as we saw in Part One, second temple Jewish texts uniformly look to the eschatological restoration of Israel as a future event. Philippians 2:6-9, by contrast, reflects the remarkable conviction that the eschatological time of promise has now dawned in Jesus of Nazareth. This extraordinary interpretation of the fourth Song, although without parallel in ancient Judaism, is nonetheless not unique to the Christ hymn, but is widespread in early Christian literature. Indeed, the only interpretation of the fourth Servant Song of which we have evidence in primitive Christian sources interprets this passage, as does the Christ hymn, of the suffering, death and glorification of Jesus as the Christ.⁸⁷ This interpretation,

⁸⁷ Cf. Mt 8:17; 20:28; Mk 10:45; Jn 1:29; 12:38; Acts 3:13; 8:32-35; Rom 4:25-5:1; 15:21; 1 Cor 15:3; 1 Pet 2:21-25; 1 Jn 3:5; *1 Clement* 16; Justin, *Dial.* 13; 32; *1 Apol.* 50-51. On the messianic interpretation of Isa 53 in earliest Christianity, see Otto Betz, "Jesus und Jesaja 53," *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion* (FS Martin Hengel; eds. Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Peter Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996) 3-19; Otfried Hofius, "Das vierte Gottesknechtslied in den Briefen des Neuen Testaments," *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte* (eds.

distinctive to early Christianity, of the fourth Song as fulfilled in the suffering, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth, is powerfully expressed in the Christ hymn.

Although this interpretation of the fourth Song, which reflects the conviction that the eschatological time has come in Jesus as the Christ, is without parallel in ancient Judaism, the conceptual milieu of this interpretation is thoroughly Jewish, and only in light of its Jewish background can the full implications of this interpretation in Paul's mind be understood. As we saw in Part One, there was no Jewish mission in antiquity, and Jewish thinking in the second temple period did not involve a consciousness of mission to gentiles. In Philippians, as we have seen, the missionary consciousness and praxis of earliest Christianity stands out in marked contrast. If there was no prior Jewish mission to gentiles, what is the source of the intense missionary consciousness reflected in Philippians? One part of the answer clearly lies in the primitive Christian belief, evident in the Christ hymn, that in Jesus the messianic time of fulfillment had come. As we saw in Part One, one key aspect of the Jewish hope of eschatological redemption was the expectation of a pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in the impending time of the God of Israel's eschatological reign. The eschatological time of restoration and the conversion of gentiles belong inseparably together in Jewish thought, and this connection is also made explicit in Paul's letters and in other early Christian documents.⁸⁸ As Riesner observes, "The consciousness of a universal mission to the gentiles was part of the early Christian belief of living in the times of messianic fulfillment."⁸⁹ Paul Bowers rightly notes that this eschatological understanding "dominates Paul's

Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1996) 107-127; D. Jeffrey Bingham, "Justin and Isaiah 53," *Vigiliae Christianae* 54 (2000) 248-261.

⁸⁸ Cf. e.g. Rom 1:1-7; 9:25-26; 15:8-12; 16:25-26; 1 Cor 14:25; Gal 3; Ac 15:14-18.

⁸⁹ "Jewish Mission" 249-250. On the strongly eschatological character of the gentile mission in Paul's thought, see Köstenberger/O'Brien, *Salvation* 164-165; L. Peerbolte, "Romans 15:14-29 and Paul's Missionary Agenda," *Persuasion and Dissuasion in Early Christianity, Ancient Judaism, and Hellenism* (eds. Pieter W. van der Horst, et al.; Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 143-159; idem, *Paul the Missionary* 213-221; Oscar Cullmann, "Eschatology and Missions in the New Testament," *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology* (eds. W.D. Davies and D. Daube; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) 409-421; Hahn, *Mission* 16-17; Scobie, "Nations" 300-301. For the eschatological understanding of mission in the Synoptic tradition, see Jeremias, *Promise* 55-75.

understanding of his mission.”⁹⁰ The conviction that the eschatological time had now come is at the heart of early Christian mission, and this conviction comes to clear expression in the Christ hymn.

The connection in Paul’s thought between the eschatological exaltation of the Servant and the gentile mission is made explicit in the conclusion of the Christ hymn (2:10-11). In the hymn the allusions to the Isaianic suffering Servant passage extend only through verse 9. In verse 10 the focus of the hymn shifts from the description of Christ Jesus’ self-emptying (2:6-7), abasement (2:8a), death (2:8b) and exaltation (2:9) as the messianic Servant, to reflection upon the purposes of God (ἵνα, 2:10) in exalting him. At this same juncture the focus of exegetical reflection shifts from Isaiah 52:13-53:12, to another Isaian passage. The universal eschatological homage to God among all the peoples of the earth envisaged in LXX Isaiah 45:22-23 (ἔμοι κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ καὶ ἐξομολογήσεται πᾶσα γλῶσσα τῷ θεῷ, 45:23) is interpreted in the hymn of the universal cosmic dominion of Christ Jesus following his exaltation (ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη . . . καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, 2:10-11).⁹¹ The Christ hymn thus reflects a connected reading of the latter part of Isaiah, in which the eschatological reign of God over the nations envisaged in Isaiah 45:18-25 is understood as the outcome of the suffering and exaltation of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, identified with the crucified, risen and glorified Christ Jesus.⁹²

In the context of the Philippians’ confrontation with the wider civic community at the Roman colony of Philippi, the hymn’s depiction of the absolute sovereignty of Christ Jesus, in pointed contrast to the claims of Roman power, has a strongly hortatory thrust.⁹³ To fully

⁹⁰ “Propaganda” 323 (n. 13).

⁹¹ That Phil 2:10-11 alludes to Isa 45:23 and portrays this passage as fulfilled in Christ Jesus is almost universally acknowledged; see Martin, *Carmen Christi* 255-256.

⁹² On Paul’s connected reading of Isaiah 40-55 in the hymn, cf. Bauckham, *God Crucified* 56-61. For the strong evidence elsewhere in Paul’s letters for a connected reading of Isaiah 40-55, see the seminal study of Richard B. Hays, “‘Who Has Believed Our Message?’: Paul’s Reading of Isaiah,” *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 1998* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 205-225.

⁹³ Cf. Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 253-259; Oakes, “Sovereignty” 134-139; idem, *Philippians: From People to Letter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 129-210. On the anti-imperial connotations of Paul’s language in Philippians, see above, pp. 218-219.

grasp the precise paraenetic force of the hymn, however, it is crucial to recognize that the universal lordship of Christ Jesus portrayed in Philippians 2:10-11 involves within the context of the letter both present and future dimensions.⁹⁴ The consummation of the cosmic rule of Christ over all creation occurs in Paul's thought at Jesus' advent in the "day of Christ" (1:6; 1:10; 2:16; cf. Rom 8:18-25; 1 Cor 15:20-28; 1 Thess 4:13-5:11). The salvation which Paul (1:19) and the Philippians (1:28) await, as Philippians 3:20-21 makes clear, is precisely the universal dominion of Christ Jesus depicted in Philippians 2:10-11. At the same time, the hymn depicts the exaltation of Christ Jesus as having already taken place (2:9), and the precise way in which the hymn depicts the reign of the exalted Christ in 2:10-11 suggests that it is understood as already inaugurated in the present in the conversion of the gentiles to Christ through the gospel. The allusion to Isaiah 45:22-23 is extremely significant, for, as we saw in chapter two, this passage in Isaiah occurs in the context of an invitation to gentiles for conversion (cf. 45:22, ἐπιστρέφῃτε πρὸς με καὶ σωθήσεσθε, ἀπ' ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς ["Turn to me and you will be saved, all the ends of the earth!"]). As we saw, this passage, the only invitation to conversion directly addressed to gentiles in the Old Testament, functions within Isaiah 40-55 to depict the conversion of the nations in the time of Yahweh's eschatological reign.⁹⁵ Further, the affirmation made by every tongue (κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, 2:11) is identical with the primitive Christian baptismal confession (Rom 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3). This confession reflects in turn the missionary message which was preached to gentiles (2 Cor 4:5). Philippians 2:10-11 is thus strongly evocative of the gentile mission, and portrays the conversion of gentiles through this mission as both the purpose of the humiliation and exaltation of Christ Jesus described in the hymn (2:6-9), and the inauguration of the universal lordship of Christ Jesus which will be consummated at his advent. In Paul's thought, the eschatological and salvific reign of God over the nations depicted in Isaiah 45 has already begun through the conversion of the gentiles to the gospel of Christ. As the inauguration of the reign of God over the nations and their rulers, the conversion of gentiles

⁹⁴ On the present and future aspects of eschatology in Paul's thought, see Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 177, 294, 394-395, 428-429.

⁹⁵ See above, pp. 75-77.

to the gospel has a radically counter-imperial aspect (cf. Acts 16:20-21; 17:7), and this is reflected in the hymn's climactic acclamation, in antithesis to the claims of Caesar, of the universal dominion and lordship of Christ Jesus (2:10-11).

The hymn's portrayal of the eschatological exaltation of the Servant as inaugurated in the gentile mission, is in turn reflected in the hortatory function of the Christ hymn within the wider letter. That the hymn functions paraenetically within the letter is evident not only from the way in which Paul introduces the passage (τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν, 2:5), but also from the way in which the example of Christ Jesus (ἐταπείνωσεν, 2:8) mirrors the preceding exhortation in 2:3 (τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ). This is also evident in the flashbacks to the passage in Paul's descriptions of Timothy (2:19-24) and of Epaphroditus (2:25-30), who themselves explicitly function within the epistle as models for the Philippians (cf. 2:29, τοὺς τοιοῦτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε).⁹⁶ Interpreters have long recognized the paradigmatic function of the Christ hymn in the letter within Paul's call to unity and mutuality among the Philippians (cf. especially 2:1-4). Recent study, however, has shown that, in the full context of 1:27-2:18, the hymn functions specifically as a call to unity amid suffering for the cause of Christ, in the context of opposition within the Roman colony at Philippi.⁹⁷ Readers are struck by the radical character of Paul's exhortation: Paul's advice will not ease tensions but in fact exacerbate the conflict and put the Philippians in greater danger.⁹⁸ Yet, as the preceding exposition has shown, Paul's advice is yet more radical than has been supposed, for in 1:12-2:18 Paul calls the Philippians, not simply to stand firm in the faith, but actively to exhibit their courage amid these dangers, in imitation of him and the Christians at Rome, by fearlessly spreading the gospel despite opposition within the city (1:12-13, 1:14, 1:16, 1:19-20, 1:27-30). The reign of God over the nations described in the Christ hymn (2:10-11) is realized in Paul's testimony to Christ in bold confrontation with Roman imperial power (1:19-20), and Paul exhorts the Philippians,

⁹⁶ Cf. Gerald F. Hawthorne, "Imitation of Christ: Discipleship in Philippians," *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (ed. R.N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 163-179; Peterman, *Gift* 114-119.

⁹⁷ Cf. de Vos, *Conflicts* 261-286; Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 253-259; Oakes, "Sovereignty" 134-139; Scroggs, "Political Asceticism" 190-193.

⁹⁸ See de Vos, *Conflicts* 286; Tellbe, *Synagogue and State* 275.

following his model, to live out their citizenship under the lordship of Christ through their own fearless testimony to the gospel in defiance of the claims of the Roman colony at Philippi (1:27-30). The Christ hymn thus functions, within the full paraenetic context of 1:12-2:18, as an exhortation to courageous partnership with Paul for the extension of the gospel of Christ (1:5-6).

How the Philippians are to apply Christ's example is also shown by the example of Timothy (2:19-24) and Epaphroditus (2:25-30). Timothy's example of selfless service in the interests of Christ Jesus models the attitude of Christ in the hymn (ἐδούλευσεν, 2:22 [cf. 2:7, μορφὴν δούλου]; τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2:21 [cf. 2:4, μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες]). In 2:22 Paul spells out the nature of Timothy's service as service *for the gospel* in partnership with Paul (ὥς πατρὶ τέκνον σὺν ἡμῶν ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Epaphroditus similarly is a model of Christ Jesus' obedience to the point of death (μέχρι θανάτου, 2:30 [cf. 2:8, μέχρι θανάτου]). Paul describes this obedience as Epaphroditus' risk of his own life (παραβολευσάμενος τῇ ψυχῇ, 2:30) in behalf of *the work of Christ* (τὸ ἔργον Χριστοῦ, 2:30; cf. 2:25, συνεργόν). Elsewhere in the epistle, as we have seen, ἔργον and its cognates refer to mission, whether active proclamation or associated activities (1:6, ἔργον ἀγαθόν; 1:22, καρπὸς ἔργου; 4:3, συνεργῶν), and Paul thus describes Epaphroditus' ministry to Paul as serving to promote the gospel. Both Timothy and Epaphroditus thus function in the letter as models of partnership with Paul for the gospel work. Like Epaphroditus, Paul, and the Christians at Rome, the Philippians are to risk themselves for the work of Christ, by speaking the word fearlessly despite the threat of persecution from the wider community (2:30, διὰ τὸ ἔργον Χριστοῦ . . . παραβολευσάμενος τῇ ψυχῇ; cf. 1:14, τολμᾶν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν; 1:20, ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ...μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός). Like Timothy and the friends at Rome, and unlike the negative example of those who cause divisions, the Philippians are not to preach the word from impure (2:20, ὅστις γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μεριμνήσει; cf. 1:15, διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν; 1:17, ἐξ ἐριθείας; 1:17, οὐχ ἀγῶς; 2:3, μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν) or selfish motives (2:21, τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; cf. 2:4, μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες), but work for the extension of the gospel in unity with the apostle and one another (2:22, ὥς πατρὶ τέκνον σὺν ἡμῶν ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; cf. 1:5, τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; 1:27, μίᾳ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου;

also 1:16). The examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus, who serve in the letter to flesh out the example of Christ in 2:5-11, thus cohere with the entire paraenetic thrust of 1:12-2:18, and reveal that the Christ hymn functions in Philippians as a call to partnership with Paul and with one another in courageously spreading the gospel despite the threat of suffering.

There is thus a striking correspondence between the Christological or soteriological content of Philippians 2:5-11 and its paraenetic aim within the letter. Soteriologically, the hymn presents the purpose of Christ Jesus' self-sacrifice and exaltation, which is his universal cosmic reign, as inaugurated in the conversion of the nations (2:9-11). Paraenetically, the hymn functions to exhort the Philippians to labor in partnership with Paul and one another for the fulfillment of this very purpose. The consciousness of mission which pervades Philippians has its source in the conviction that, through the exaltation of Jesus as God's messianic Servant, the eschatological time of God's reign over the nations has come.

Paul's understanding of the gentile mission as the inauguration of God's eschatological reign also finds expression in the way in which he describes the exaltation of Christ Jesus in 2:9b. His studied choice of the verb *χαρίζομαι*, which echoes 1:29 and 1:7, suggests that in Paul's mind the divine grace at work, in himself and the Philippians in their joint suffering and conflict on behalf of the gospel (*συγκοινωνούς μου τῆς χάριτος*, 1:7; *ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη*, 1:29), is nothing other than the outworking of the divine grace with which the name of Jesus was invested at his exaltation (*ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὄνομα*, 2:9b). This recalls Paul's emphasis, which we have traced throughout the letter, on the activity of Christ and God in the advancement of the gospel (cf. 1:6; 1:13; 1:14; 1:19-20; 1:28b-29), and suggests that in Paul's thought this activity was related to the exaltation of Jesus as the messianic Servant. In precisely what sense are the exaltation of Christ and Paul's emphatic stress on the activity of God in the spread of the gospel related in Paul's mind? Paul will unfold his understanding in his rich practical application of the Christ hymn to the Philippians which follows in 2:12-18.

5.6 Conclusion

In Philippians 1:19-20 Paul describes his fearless proclamation of the gospel, and expresses his confidence that his bold testimony

will eventuate in his salvation. Paul's conviction that believers must suffer with Christ in order to share his glory has its roots in Jewish thought, and its emphasis on the eschatological vindication of those who suffer for their God. At the same time, Paul's active ministry of verbal proclamation and intense missionary consciousness evident in Philippians 1:19-20 are without parallel in Jewish documents of the second temple period. Paul's courageous witness to the gospel despite the threat of suffering, like the example of Job in 1:19, and the bold speech of the Roman Christians in 1:14, serves within the letter as a model for his converts at Philippi. In 1:21-26 Paul also presents himself to the Philippians, in counterpoint to the negative example of those who preach Christ from motives of self-seeking (1:15-18a), as a model of selfless subordination of his own interests to the work of the gospel. Paul presents his continuing paraenetic instruction of the Philippians as necessary for the progress of the gospel through his converts, and thus prepares the way for his direct exhortation of the Philippians in 1:27-2:18.

In 1:27-2:4 Paul turns directly to the witness of the Philippian community. In 1:27 Paul employs traditional Jewish imagery to portray the church at Philippi as citizens of a heavenly city under the lordship of Christ, in contrast to that earthly colony of the Roman imperial order in which they live, in order to bind the Philippians to one another and to himself in a united struggle for the gospel proclamation despite opposition from the pagan populace at Philippi. Paul's extensive use in 1:27-2:4 of the language of friendship exhorts the church at Philippi to unity, and Paul's exhortation in 1:27-30 indicates a close connection between the call to unity and the threat of persecution. Paul's fusion in 1:27-30 of the language of friendship with the language of mission and proclamation reveals Paul's concern that the Philippians respond to the threat of suffering with a united and courageous struggle for the spread of the gospel. In 1:27 Paul exhorts the Philippians to life, conduct and sufferings which will adorn the message and promote the spread of the gospel. The command to be unafraid of the opponents (1:28) functions within the letter as an exhortation fearlessly to proclaim the word despite persecution and suffering. In so doing, Paul's converts share and extend Paul's missionary *ἄγων* for the spread of the gospel (1:27-30). Like Paul's fearless speech in defiance of Roman power (1:19-20), the Philippians' bold confession of the gospel in the Roman colony of Philippi will result in their salvation (1:28).

In both his paradigmatic self-description in 1:18b-26 and his direct exhortation in 1:27-2:4, Paul focuses not only on his own apostolic mission, but on the spread of the gospel through his converts at Philippi. This emphasis upon active verbal mission as a general Christian activity is extraordinary in the light of Paul's other letters. The most likely explanation for Paul's unusual emphasis in Philippians on the fearless spread of the gospel is the situation at Philippi which Paul addresses in the letter, which apparently involved the threat of persecution, and accompanying disunity. Paul's theological understanding in Philippians of active mission as a central element of Christian identity, the evidence elsewhere in Paul's letters and the book of Acts for the missionizing fervor of the earliest Christian communities, and the striking evidence in Paul's letters for the missional character of his churches in his thought, all suggest that Paul does not elsewhere exhort his churches to spread the gospel, not because an active mission of the church had no place in his thought, but in the context of a shared understanding of mission in which the need for explicit exhortation to spread the gospel was not pressing. In Philippians, by contrast, Paul's response to the situation at Philippi brings his theology of the church's mission to fuller expression.

The Christ hymn (2:5-11) combines exegetical reflection upon Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and Isaiah 45:22-23 in order to identify the suffering and eschatological exaltation of the Servant of Isaiah with the passion, resurrection and exaltation of Christ Jesus (2:6-9), and to portray the eschatological reign of God over all the peoples of the earth envisaged in Isaiah 45:22-23 as fulfilled in the universal cosmic dominion of Christ Jesus as a result of his exaltation as the messianic Servant (2:10-11). In his connected reading of Isaiah 40-55 focusing on the eschatological reign of God, Paul's thinking is profoundly Jewish. However, the Christ hymn is without parallel in ancient Judaism in its interpretation of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in terms of a suffering messiah, and in the conviction it expresses that the eschatological time of fulfillment had now come in Jesus of Nazareth. This conviction that the eschatological reign of God, which in Jewish thought involved the conversion of the gentiles to the God of Israel, had now come in Jesus as the Christ, was at the heart of the early Christian consciousness of mission. The hymn interprets Isaiah 45:22-23, which depicts the conversion of the nations in the time of Yahweh's coming reign, as fulfilled in the universal lordship of Christ Jesus, which the hymn portrays as consummated at Christ's

advent, but already inaugurated in the gentile mission (2:10-11). The hymn thus not only portrays the purpose of the eschatological drama of salvation depicted in 2:5-11 as inaugurated in the early Christian mission, but also, as the examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus reveal, functions paraenetically to exhort Paul's converts at Philippi to mission activity for the fulfillment of that very purpose. As the inauguration of the reign of God over the kingdoms of the earth, the conversion of gentiles to the gospel of Christ has in Paul's thought a strongly counter-imperial aspect. This conception undergirds both Paul's paraenetic example of testimony to Christ in bold confrontation with Roman power (1:19-20), and his direct exhortation to the Philippians despite personal risk and suffering to fearlessly disseminate the gospel in the Roman city of Philippi (1:27-30). The Christ hymn, in depicting the universal reign of Christ Jesus as inaugurated in the mission of the church, continues this hortatory theme. In so doing, the Christ hymn prepares the way for the direct exhortation to mission activity which follows in 2:12-18.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPIANS 2:12-18

6.1 *Introduction*

The accent on active mission in Philippians 1:12-2:11 which we have traced in the two previous chapters is, within its ancient context, remarkable indeed. Against the Jewish background explored in Part One, the uniqueness of the mission consciousness and praxis evident in Philippians stands out strikingly. The Christ hymn in Philippians 2:5-11 reveals that the consciousness of mission which pervades Philippians had its source in the conviction that, through the exaltation of Jesus as God's messianic Servant, the eschatological time of God's reign over the nations had come. Paul in Philippians 1:12-2:11 also reveals, as we have seen, an extraordinary interest in the dissemination of the gospel through his converts, and portrays the spread of the gospel as a general Christian activity. Moreover, Paul's emphasis on the advancement of the gospel is accompanied throughout Philippians 1 with a striking accent on the activity of Christ and God in the church's mission. Are the eschatological reign of God, the mission of the church, and the activity of God in the spread of the gospel related in Paul's mind? If so, in what way? How are these themes in Philippians related to Jewish thinking in antiquity regarding gentiles and their conversion? What role did exegesis of scripture, especially the book of Isaiah, play in Paul's understanding? To illumine these questions, we will turn to Philippians 2:12-18, Paul's practical application to the Philippians of the example of Christ Jesus portrayed in the Christ hymn (2:5-11). As we will see, close study of this passage will disclose both the Jewish character of Paul's thought in Philippians, and the role of interpretation of scripture in Paul's understanding, and thus illumine Paul's rich theology of church and mission.

6.2 *Philippians 2:12-13: The Work of the Philippians and of God*

Through the conjunction ὥστε (2:12), and the use of ὑπηκούσατε (2:12, καθώς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε), which corresponds to ὑπήκοος in 2:8, Paul explicitly connects 2:12-18 to the preceding Christ-hymn (2:6-11), and indicates that the exhortation which follows draws out the implications of Christ's example depicted in 2:6-11 for the life of the Philippian community.¹ In Philippians 2:12-18 Paul thus spells out the hortatory consequences of the preceding Christ hymn (2:5-11) for the Christians at Philippi, and powerfully concludes the first hortatory section of the letter (1:12-2:18). The passage is thus crucial for an understanding of the epistle as a whole.

However, the command by which Paul introduces the passage in 2:12, τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε, is a notorious *crux interpretum* which has traditionally baffled interpreters. Interpreters have found it difficult to fit this command into either the context of the letter, or the thought of Paul as a whole. The exhortation to "work out your own salvation" has seemed to many interpreters to conflict with Paul's teaching elsewhere in his letters that salvation is not received on the basis of works, but solely through the grace of God and faith (Rom 1:16; 4:2-8; 5:9-10; 10:9; 11:6; 1 Cor 1:21; Gal 2:16).² The apparent theological difficulties involved in Paul's formulation

¹ On ὥστε, cf. the gloss of Theodoret: εἰς τοῦτο ἀφορῶντες τὸ παράδειγμα; see also Eadie, *Philippians* 127-28; O'Brien, *Philippians* 272-73; Otto Merk, *Handeln aus Glauben: Die Motivierung des paulinischen Ethik* (Marburg: Elwert, 1968) 183. Lohmeyer calls Philippians 2:12-18 a "practical commentary upon the hymn" (*Philipp* 99). Cf. the similar use of ὥστε in 4:1; 1 Cor 5:8; 11:33; 14:39; 15:58; 1 Thess 4:18.

² See Jost Eckert, "'Mit Furcht und Zittern wirkt euer Heil' (Phil 2,12). Zur Furcht vor Gott als christlicher Grundhaltung," *Die Freude an Gott-unsere Kraft* (ed. J. J. Degenhardt; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1991) 262-63. Dibelius characterizes Paul's exhortation here, in view of his thought elsewhere, as "befremdlich" (*Philipp* 83). Louw and Nida remark that the verse "could be understood to mean that individuals had complete responsibility for their personal salvation, but Paul always speaks of personal salvation as the act of God" (*A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Philippians* [New York: UBS, 1977] 67). Cf. Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 102; J.L. Houlden, *Paul's Letters from Prison* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1970) 85. O. Glombitza ("Mit Furcht und Zittern: Zum Verständnis von Philip. II 12," *NovT* 3 [1959-60] 100-106) seeks to cut the Gordian knot by taking μὴ directly with the imperative κατεργάζεσθε, and positing that Philippians 2:12 is not a command, but a prohibition ("do not with fear and trembling work out your salvation") (103). The suggestion is philologically baseless, for μὴ must in view of its position be taken with the prepositional phrase ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον and not directly with the imperative κατεργάζεσθε (cf. *BDR* §433).

are raised acutely by the precise language which Paul uses, for the command *κατεργάζεσθε* clearly indicates that the Philippians are by their own activity to accomplish or effect their salvation.³ Similarly problematical is the place of the exhortation in the context of

³ The compound form *κατεργάζομαι* is derived from the simple verb *ἐργάζομαι*. The verbs of general activity in Greek (e.g. *ποιέω*, *πράσσω*, *ἐργάζομαι*) evince a generalization of meaning and are in many contexts virtually interchangeable (Schmidt, *Synonymik* 412-14; cf. *Test. Naph.* 8.4 [ἐὰν ἐργάσησθε τὸ καλὸν . . . τὸν δὲ μὴ ποιοῦντα τὸ καλόν]; *Test. Gad* 6.5; *Test. Benj.* 11.1; *3 Bar* 15.2; *Ep. Arist.* 210.5; 281.6; 306.4). However, the verb *ἐργάζομαι* may in general be distinguished from *ποιέω* in that the former, like the noun *ἔργον* from which it is derived (Frisk, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch* 1.549), accents the *activity* of the subject, the latter the *result* of the activity (J.H.H. Schmidt, *Handbuch der lateinischen und griechischen Synonymik* [reprinted; Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1968] 295, 298; *Synonymik* 415-18). The distinction is well illustrated in the distinction between the perfect passive of *ποιέω*, which refers to something which has been created or effected (e.g. *Heb* 12:27), and the perfect passive of *ἐργάζομαι*, which is often intransitive in sense and indicates only that “work has been done,” as frequently in the papyri on certificates of work performed, e.g. *P. Ryl.* II.210.8; *P. Fay.* 79.3. Cf. also *PGM* IV.2210, ὅθεν ἐργάζονται οἱ τὰ ἔρια ποιοῦντες (“the place where those who *produce* [ποιοῦντες] the wool *work* [ἐργάζονται]”). The preposition *κατά* in composition very often has a perfective force (cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 605-606), and Chrysostom assumes such a meaning of the compound form in 2:12: Οὐκ εἶπεν, ἐργάζεσθε, ἀλλὰ κατεργάζεσθε, τουτέστι, μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς σπουδῆς, μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς ἐπιμελείας. But there is no hint of such a meaning in the ancient usage of the verb. The prefix *κατά* rather, as often elsewhere, serves in *κατεργάζομαι* as a *transitive prefix*. The prefix is so used with many verbs to give a transitive force to an otherwise intransitive verb (e.g. *αἰσχύνω* “be ashamed,” *καταισχύνω*, “put to shame”). The similar distinction which the prefix produces in the case of *κατεργάζομαι* may be illustrated by New Testament usage. The simple verb *ἐργάζομαι* is frequently used transitively, but the accusative in such cases almost never refers to an outward effect or result, but to the inner content of the act (e.g. *Acts* 13:41, ἔργον; *1 Cor* 16:10, τὸ ἔργον; *Gal* 6:10, τὸ ἀγαθόν; *Eph* 4:26, τὸ ἀγαθόν; *Mt* 7:23, ἀνομίαν; 26:10, ἔργον καλόν; *Mk* 14:6, καλὸν ἔργον; *Acts* 10:35, δικαιοσύνην; cf. *Jn* 6:28; 9:4; *Rom* 13:10; *Col* 3:23; *Heb* 11:33; *Ja* 1:20; 2:9; *2 Jn* 8; *3 Jn* 5). The compound form *κατεργάζομαι* can also be used in the same sense (e.g. *Rom* 1:27, τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην; 2:9, τὸ κακόν; 7:18, τὸ καλόν; cf. *Rom* 7:15; 7:17; 7:20; 15:18; *1 Cor* 5:3; *2 Cor* 12:12; *Eph* 6:13; *1 Pet* 4:3), and when it is, the compound and simple verb can be used almost interchangeably (e.g. *Rom* 2:9-10). However, the compound *κατεργάζομαι* is also frequently used with an accusative expressing the outward effect or result of the act (e.g. *Rom* 4:15, ὀργήν; 5:3, ὑπομονήν; 7:8, ἐπιθυμίαν; 7:13, θάνατον; *2 Cor* 4:17, βάρος; 5:5, ἡμᾶς; 7:10, θάνατον; 7:11, σπουδήν; 9:11, εὐχαριστίαν; *Ja* 1:3, ὑπομονήν), something which the simple verb can do much less readily (only *Ps* 73:12, σωτηρίαν; perhaps also *2 Cor* 7:10, μετάνοιαν). This explains Paul’s choice of the term in *Phil* 2:12, where the activity of the Philippians (*κατεργάζεσθε*) is to be directed to a result separate from the act itself (τὴν ἐαυτῶν σωτηρίαν). Cf. θάνατον ἑαυτοῖς *κατεργάζονται* “they work death for themselves” (*Herm., Man.* 4.1.2; *Vis.* 8.8.5).

1:27-2:18. J.H. Michael considers “an appeal to work out one’s own individual salvation” to be “singularly inappropriate coming immediately after the great passage in which is described the self-sacrifice of our Lord.”⁴ He has been followed by a number of interpreters in seeking to solve these difficulties by positing a strictly “communal” or “social” meaning of σωτηρία in the passage. According to Michael, the word refers not to personal deliverance at the advent of Christ but to “the well-being of the community.”⁵ This interpretation has received a good deal of support among recent interpreters.⁶ However, this reading has also been widely criticized.⁷

The “communal” interpretation is in fact highly unlikely, on several counts. First, this reading rests upon the assignment of a meaning to σωτηρία which the word never possesses elsewhere in Paul. In Paul σωτηρία and its cognates always refer to the salvation brought about through Christ.⁸ Paul usually employs the term specifically of the ultimate deliverance of the saints at Christ’s parousia.⁹ Second, σωτηρία and its cognates elsewhere in Philippians always refer to personal deliverance at Christ’s appearing (1:19; 1:28; 3:20). As we saw in the previous chapter, Philippians 1:19 and 1:28 focus on the salvation of believers in the day of Christ, and 2:12 thus continues this theme. Third, the function of 2:12-18 as the practical application of the example of Christ Jesus in the Christ hymn seems to require

⁴ *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928) 98. Cf. the very perceptive discussion in Eadie, *Philippians* 129-131.

⁵ Michael, *Philippians* 101; idem, “Work out your own Salvation,” *Expositor*, 9th series, 12 (1924) 439-50.

⁶ Michael is followed in this interpretation by Martin, *Philippians* 102-103; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 98-99; Louw and Nida, *Philippians* 67; Williams, *Enemies* 136-137; and, with modifications, F.F. Bruce, *Philippians* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989) 81-83.

⁷ Cf. Joachim Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968) 149; F.W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians* (2nd ed.; London: Black, 1964) 90. For the traditional interpretation, still the most widely held, see I. Howard Marshall, *Kept By the Power of God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969) 122-25; S. Pedersen, “‘Mit Furcht und Zittern’ (Phil 2,12-13),” *ST* 32 (1978) 22; Eckert, “Furcht” 267-70; J. Müller, *The Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955) 90-91; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 115-116; Silva, *Philippians* 134-40; many others.

⁸ E.g. Rom 1:16; 8:24; 10:1; 10:9; 10:10; 10:13; 11:11; 11:14; 11:26; 1 Cor 1:18; 1:21; 7:16; 9:22; 10:33; 15:2; 2 Cor 1:6; 2:15; 6:2; 7:10; 1 Thess 2:16; 2 Thess 2:10; 2:13.

⁹ E.g. Rom 5:9-10; 9:27; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:15; 5:5; 1 Thess 5:8; 5:9.

that the σωτηρία of the Philippians refers to their personal salvation in the day of Christ. As Christ Jesus by becoming obedient to the point of death on a cross (2:6-8) was highly *exalted* by God the Father and given the name above every name (2:9-11), so the Philippians, following his example of obedience, are with fear and trembling to accomplish their own *salvation* (2:12).¹⁰ It is thus not the health of the Philippian community, but their own personal salvation, which Paul calls upon the Christians at Philippi to “work out” (κατεργάζεσθε).

The command calls out for explanation, for while Paul in Philippians 2:12 exhorts the Philippians to accomplish their salvation, he does not explicitly describe *how* this is to be done.¹¹ How precisely were the Philippians to work out their salvation? The Christ hymn itself provides an important clue. We have seen that the Christ hymn, through echo of the depiction of the reign of God over the nations in Isaiah 45:22-23 and allusion to the Christian baptismal confession, portrays the universal homage to Christ, which is the purpose of Jesus’ humiliation and exaltation, as inaugurated in the gentile mission. This would suggest that Paul in the exhortation which follows in 2:12-18 will be concerned with the extension of the gospel. This would in turn suggest, together with Paul’s concern throughout the letter with the spread of the gospel through the Philippian community which we have documented, that the command in 2:12 has a very different function within the context of the letter than hitherto supposed, and is directly related to the Philippians’ missionizing activity. That Philippians 2:12 functions within the context of 2:12-18 as an exhortation to suffer for the spread of the gospel will be evident from an examination of the command in the full literary context of Paul’s systematic development of themes and motifs within 1:12-2:18 as a whole.

¹⁰ How natural within his Jewish context Paul’s paradigmatic application of Christ Jesus’ exaltation to the Philippians’ salvation was, is evident from Wisdom of Solomon, where, as we saw in Part One, the exaltation of the Servant figure of LXX Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is interpreted as the *salvation* of the suffering Jewish community in the time of eschatological resurrection and vindication (σωτηρίας, *Wis* 5:2).

¹¹ Cf. Larsson, *Vorbild* 264.

6.2.1 *Philippians 2:12 in its Literary Context*

While the opening conjunction ὥστε relates the following exhortation to the example of Christ, the words ἀγαπητοί μου turn attention to the relationship between the Philippian church and the apostle.¹² Paul then proceeds to qualify the injunction which is to follow, by exhorting the Philippians to follow the exhortation not only as in his presence, but now much more so in his absence (μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ μου).¹³ In 1:27 Paul had similarly called upon the Philippians to follow his instructions regardless of his presence or absence (εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπών). In philosophical texts the language of presence and absence functions to underscore the role of the philosopher as a moral paradigm for his students.¹⁴ Paul's language in 2:12 reflects this motif, and serves to underscore Paul's ongoing paradigmatic role for the Philippians. The model evoked is that of Paul in chains, not knowing whether he will live or be put to death, for the sake of the gospel. In his paradigmatic self-description in 1:12-26, as we have seen, the point which Paul stresses is his bold speech in behalf of the gospel (1:13; 1:16; 1:19-20; cf. 1:7). This then would suggest that the activity in which Paul will exhort the Philippians to follow his example in 2:12 involves the spread of the gospel despite personal risk and suffering.

This is suggested further by the repetition in 2:12 of other motifs which elsewhere in the letter are specifically related to the Philippians' participation with Paul for the extension of the gospel. At both the beginning (1:5-6) and close (4:10-17) of the letter, Paul gives thanks for the Philippians' partnership for the gospel (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5) from the very beginning (ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἡμέρας, 1:5; ὁ ἐναρξάμενος, 1:6; ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 4:15) until the present (ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν, 1:5; ἤδη ποτε, 4:10). This motif is repeated

¹² The expression ἀγαπητοί, twice repeated in 4:1, is evocative of the warm relationship between Paul and the Philippian congregation evident throughout the letter (e.g. 1:7-8; 3:1; 4:3; 4:15-16).

¹³ As Paul's use of μὴ (rather than οὐ) and of νῦν make plain, the phrase is to be taken, not with the preceding ὑποκούσατε, but with the following imperative κατεργάζεσθε. This is recognized by most expositors; cf. Merk, *Handeln* 183; Eadie, *Philippians* 128; Ellicott, *Philippians* 63; and see Robertson, *Grammar* 1162.

¹⁴ Seneca, *Ep.* 11.8-10; 25.5-6; 32.1; Lucian, *Nigr.* 6-7; cf. 1 Thess 3:6-8.

in 1:20 (ὥς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν), again in connection with the preaching of the gospel. In 2:12 Paul once again reflects upon the past conduct of the Philippians (καθὼς πάντοτε) and exhorts them to continue this activity in the present (νῦν πολλῷ μᾶλλον). The reappearance of this motif in 2:12 would thus suggest that the exhortation is related to the Philippians' partnership for the gospel work.

Paul in 2:12 not only reflects upon the past conduct of the Philippians, but also highlights the progress and increased fruitfulness to which he now exhorts them (μὴ ὥς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ).¹⁵ Similarly in Philippians 1:6, Paul expresses his confidence that God will complete (ἐπιτελέσει) what he has begun (ἐναρξάμενος) in the Philippians, and in 1:14 he highlights the increased (περισσότερος) courage of the Roman Christians. In both Philippians 1:6 and 1:14 the activity which is envisioned as progressing is the work of spreading the gospel (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5; τολμᾶν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν, 1:14; cf. 1:12, προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου). Paul's use of this motif again in 2:12 (μὴ ὥς . . . πολλῷ μᾶλλον) would therefore, once again, suggest that the exhortation involves the spread of the gospel.

In exhorting the Philippians to accomplish their salvation, Paul's choice of the verb κατεργάζεσθε is also extremely significant. As we have seen, ἔργον and its cognates are regularly used by Paul and other New Testament writers with reference to the work of spreading the gospel.¹⁶ Even more significantly, in Philippians itself, ἔργον and its cognates, as we have seen, are used throughout the letter with reference to mission activity, whether active proclamation or related activities which serve to further the gospel (1:22, καρπὸς ἔργου; 2:25; 2:30, τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Χριστοῦ; 4:3). In 1:5-6 Paul specifically describes the Philippians' partnership for the gospel (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ

¹⁵ The ὥς does not indicate motive (i.e. "not *as if* in my presence only"), *contra* Lightfoot, *Philippians* 116; Ellicott, *Philippians* 63; Silva, *Philippians* 141, but rather marks the comparison between the Philippians' past conduct when Paul was with them and the conduct to which he now exhorts them ("not *as* [i.e. you did] in my presence only, but now *much more so* in my absence"). Rightly Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriege* 97-98.

¹⁶ E.g. Rom 16:3; 16:21; 1 Cor 3:9; 3:13-15; 9:1; 16:10; 16:16; 2 Cor 11:13; Gal 2:8; 1 Thess 3:2; Philemon 1; cf. Acts 13:2; 14:46; 15:38; Mt 9:37; Lk 13:27; 1 Tim 5:18; 2 Tim 2:15. See Ernst Lohmeyer, "Probleme paulinischer Theologie. II. Gesetzeswerke," *ZNW* 28 (1929) 197-99; Ware, "Thessalonians" 127-28 (n. 9).

ὕμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5) as an ἔργον ἀγαθόν (1:6). This would strongly suggest that κατεργάζεσθε in 2:12 is to be read in light of the ἔργον ἀγαθόν of 1:6, and the systematic use of cognates of ἔργον throughout the letter with reference to mission activity, and thus refers to the extension of the gospel in some way through the Philippian community.

In referring to the Philippians' salvation (σωτηρίαν, 2:12), Paul again sounds a theme which he has carefully developed throughout the first two chapters of the letter. In Philippians 1:19-20 Paul cited LXX Job 13:16, in which Job affirms his confidence that his fearless speech (λαλήσω, 13:15; cf. ψυχὴν δέ μου θήσω ἐν χειρί, 13:14b) before the ruler who threatens him with death will result in his salvation (σωτηρίαν, 13:16). Paul thereby expressed his conviction that his own bold speech in behalf of the gospel in defiance of Roman power (ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνηθήσομαι, ἀλλ' ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός, 1:20; cf. 1:16; 1:7), and the wider preaching of the gospel resulting from it (Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, 1:18), will bring about his own salvation (τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν). As we saw, Paul's self-presentation in 1:18b-26 functions in the letter as a model for the Philippians. In Philippians 1:27-28 Paul calls upon the believers in the Roman colony at Philippi to share his struggle for the gospel (συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, 1:27; τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα, 1:30) and to be unafraid of those who threaten them (καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, 1:28; cf. ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν, 1:14), enduring suffering for the sake of Christ (1:29). This, Paul writes, will be a proof to the opponents of their own perdition, but of the Philippians' salvation (ἐνδειξις ἀπωλείας ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, 1:28). In both 1:19-20 and 1:27-28 the bold confession and proclamation of the gospel in the face of persecution brings salvation (σωτηρία). Paul's use of σωτηρία in 2:12 recalls this carefully developed thematic pattern, and indicates that the activity whereby the Philippians are to work their own salvation (τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12) is their fearless confession of the gospel despite persecution and suffering.

Paul exhorts the Philippians to work their salvation "with fear and trembling" (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου, 2:12).¹⁷ It is vain to search, as

¹⁷ The prepositional phrase is in view of its position to be taken with κατεργάζεσθε,

many interpreters do, for a specific connotation which this expression must have in all contexts.¹⁸ The phrase *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου* could clearly be used in a variety of senses.¹⁹ The key to understanding its meaning in Philippians 2:12 lies in understanding the function of the expression within the wider vocabulary of the letter. Elsewhere in Philippians Paul accumulates words expressive of courage, and words expressive of fear always denote trepidation before non-Christian opponents (cf. *ἀφόβως*, 1:14; *τολμᾶν*, 1:14; *μὴ πτυρόμενοι*, 1:28; *εὐψυχῶ*, 2:19; *παραβολεύσάμενος*, 2:30). In the two passages which we have seen are most closely related to 2:12 within the thematic structure of the letter, Philippians 1:19-20 and 1:27-28, Paul highlights the *absence* of fear which he and the Philippians are to exhibit (*ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ*, 1:20; *μὴ πτυρόμενοι*, 1:28; cf. 1:14, *ἀφόβως*). In Philippians 2:12, by contrast, Paul exhorts the Philippians to fear and trembling, and the object of this fear is not human beings, but God. This would suggest that in 2:12 the words *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου* have an antithetic force, and implicitly contrast fear of God, before whom it is due, with fear of human beings. Such a contrast is frequently found in the context of early Christian mission traditions which highlight the necessity of confession of Christ and of the gospel in the teeth of opposition and suffering.²⁰ These Christian traditions in turn take up earlier Jewish traditions which contrast the fear of God and the fear of human beings.²¹ The Christian use of this

not ὑπηκούσατε (*contra* J.H. Burn, "Philippians 2:12," *ExpTim* 34 [1922-23] 562; P. Thompson, "Philippians 2:12," *ExpTim* 34 [1922-23] 429).

¹⁸ This is the approach, for example, of Pedersen, "Furcht" 11-21; Lohmeyer, *Philipp* 102-103; Glombitza, "Furcht" 101-103; Schenk, *Philippbriefe* 215-16; and Hawthorne, *Philippians* 99-100.

¹⁹ In the LXX often of the terror of the nations before God's power (e.g. Ex 15:16; Deut 2:25; 11:25; Ps 2:11; Isa 19:16); in Eph 6:5 of the obedience of a slave; in 2 Cor 7:15 of the obedience of the Corinthians to Paul's envoy Titus.

²⁰ E.g. Mt 10:28, καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων τὸ σῶμα . . . φοβεῖσθε δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπολέσαι ἐν γεένῃ; 1 Pet 3:14-16, τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε μηδὲ ταραχθῆτε, κύριον δὲ τὸν Χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε . . . ἀλλὰ μετὰ πραύτητος καὶ φόβου; cf. Lk 12:4-5. See also 1 Cor 2:3, where Paul describes his missionizing activity among the Corinthians as carried out ἐν φόβου καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ.

²¹ Cf. Isa 8:12-13, τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ φοβηθῆτε οὐδὲ μὴ ταραχθῆτε· κύριον αὐτὸν ἀγιάσατε, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται σου φόβος; 4 Macc 13:14-15, μὴ φοβηθῶμεν τὸν δοκοῦντα ἀποκτεννεῖν· μέγας γὰρ ἀγὼν καὶ κίνδυνος ἐν αἰωνίῳ βασάνῳ κείμενος τοῖς παραβάσι τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ.

tradition is distinctive, however, in that in early Christian sources this language regularly functions within the context of exhortation to mission.²² Similarly in Philippians 2:12, Paul employs this tradition in order to exhort the Philippians fearlessly to speak the word despite opposition within the city of Philippi.

In the injunction τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάσεσθε, the pronoun ἑαυτῶν, in view of its emphatic position, and Paul's choice of the reflexive form, is far more emphatic than most English translations would suggest. Implicit in τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν ("your own salvation") is a comparison or contrast between the Philippians and another person or persons. It is possible that the emphatic pronoun ἑαυτῶν functions to juxtapose the activity of the Philippians with the example of Paul, whose paradigmatic role for the Philippians is evoked, as we have seen, by the language of presence and absence in 2:12a. Just as Paul's bold speech in behalf of the gospel will result in his salvation (1:19-20), so the Philippians, through their own bold proclamation of the gospel, are to work their own (ἑαυτῶν) salvation (2:12). It is also possible that the contrast is between the hearers of the gospel, who are saved through the Philippians' proclamation of the word (cf. 1 Cor 1:21; 9:22; 1 Thess 2:16), and the Philippians themselves, who are saved through their own unashamed confession of the gospel in the face of suffering. A decision between these alternatives is difficult, and the possibility that both concepts are present to Paul's mind cannot be excluded.

Philippians 2:12, then, read within the full literary context of Philippians 1:12-2:18, functions within the letter as an exhortation to suffering on behalf of the message of the gospel. This explains what has otherwise seemed so puzzling, why Paul in 2:12 exhorts the Philippians to work out their own salvation, but does not describe how this is to be done. This is so because 2:12 does not introduce a new command, but serves to draw together and climax Paul's entire appeal in 1:12-2:11.²³ Functioning within the context of Paul's exhortation throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18 to fearlessly proclaim the word (1:12-13; 1:14; 1:16; 1:19-20; 1:27-30; cf. 1:5-6), and especially within the context of Paul's careful development of the theme

²² Note the complex of mission traditions in which this tradition functions in Mt 10:5-42; Lk 12:2-12; 1 Cor 2:1-5; and 1 Pet 3:14-16 (cf. 3:15, ἔτοιμοι ἀεὶ πρὸς ἀπολογίαν παντὶ τῷ αἰτοῦντι ὑμᾶς λόγον περὶ τῆς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐλπίδος).

²³ Oakes, *Philippians* 108-109, to whom I am indebted for this insight.

of salvation in 1:19-20, 1:27-28 and 2:12-13, the content of Paul's exhortation is quite clear. Paul exhorts the Philippians to boldly spread the word despite persecution and suffering.

How is it, then, that the Philippians' courageous suffering on behalf of the gospel will bring about their own salvation? As we have seen, Paul's paraenesis throughout Philippians 1:12-2:11 reflects the conviction that believers must suffer with Christ in order to share in salvation at his advent.²⁴ The eschatological vindication of those who suffer in behalf of God is, as we saw in Part One, a key feature of Jewish thought in antiquity.²⁵ Exhortation to suffering in early Christian sources is distinctive, however, in its emphasis upon proclamation, speech and active mission (e.g. Mt 10:17-20; 10:26-31; Mk 8:35; 13:9-13; Lk 12:2-12; Acts 4:13; 4:18-20; 4:29-31; 5:41-42; 1 Pet 3:14-15; 4:12-18; 2 Tim 1:8). Suffering in early Christian thought has a definite protreptic or missionizing aspect, and this is reflected in the fact that traditions regarding confession of Christ and of the gospel are regularly situated within the larger complex of early Christian traditions of mission.²⁶ Thus in the Synoptic tradition, suffering in behalf of Christ and the gospel brings salvation (Mk 8:35, ὃς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου σώσει αὐτήν; cf. Mt 10:17-22; 16:25; Mk 13:9-13). Likewise Paul proclaims the gospel which saves (1 Cor 9:22, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω), so that he may share in the salvation it brings (1 Cor 9:23, ἵνα συγκοινωνῶς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι). As we saw, the thematic progression within Philippians 1:19-20 and 1:27-28 presupposes this pattern of thought. It is in light of this pattern that Paul knows (οἶδα γὰρ, 1:19) that his unashamed defense of the gospel (1:16, 1:20) will result in his salvation (1:19-20). In light of this understanding, Paul can affirm that the Philippians' fearless endurance of suffering for the gospel is an infallible proof (ἔνδειξις, 1:28) of their future salvation (1:27-28). Paul also reflects this pattern of thought in 2:12, in his conviction that by boldly holding forth the gospel in the face of opposition, the Philippians will work out their own salvation (τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε).

²⁴ See above, pp. 207-208, 219-220.

²⁵ See above, pp. 115, 120, 130-131.

²⁶ See Mt 10:32-33, within Mt 10:5-42; Mk 13:13, within Mk 13:9-13; Lk 12:8-9, within Lk 12:1-12; Jn 12:25, within 12:20-26; Rom 10:9-10, within Rom 10:1-21.

6.2.2 *The Activity of God in Philippians 2:13*

The verse which follows (2:13) provides the basis or motive (γάρ, 2:13) for the exhortation in 2:12.²⁷ The source of the Philippians' activity (κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12) is the activity of God (ἐνεργῶν, 2:13). The verb ἐνεργέω stresses the efficacious nature of this divine activity.²⁸ In early Christian literature the word is used almost exclusively of supernatural activity, in the New Testament usually, as here, of the activity of God.²⁹ The phrase ἐν ὑμῖν does not mean here "among you" or "in your midst," but "in you." The phrase refers to God's activity within the hearts and minds of the Philippian Christians, for Paul envisages this divine operation as affecting not only the actions of the Philippians but also their wills (καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ

²⁷ The conjunction γάρ is here not explanatory (*contra* Ellicott, *Philippians* 64; Eadie, *Philippians* 132; de Wette, *Philippus* 202), but, as normally following imperatives, causal, supplying the motive or reason for the action enjoined (cf. Rom 6:14; also Mt 1:20; 2:20; 3:9; 7:2; Rom 13:11; Co 3:3; 1 Thess 4:7; Heb 2:2; and see Thayer, *Lexicon* 110).

²⁸ Derived from the adjective ἐνεργός ("effective, active"), the verb, and its cognate noun ἐέργεια, are distinguished from other members of the ἔργον family such as ἐργάζομαι, in that the latter indicate merely the activity or effort of the subject (cf. Schmidt, *Synonymik* 415-18) while ἐνεργέω always includes the additional idea of the productivity or efficaciousness of the activity in question as well. Thus Aristotle takes for granted that ἐνέργεια and δύναμις are to be distinguished (φανερὸν ὅτι δύναμις καὶ ἐνέργεια ἑτερόν ἐστιν, *Metaph.* 1047a), the latter referring only to potential power, the former to effective working which produces the result at which it aims (*Metaph.* 1045b-1051a; cf. 1019a-1020a; *EN* 1094a). To mere activity without effect Aristotle explicitly refuses the name ἐνέργεια and admits only the term κίνησις (*Metaph.* 1048b.18-35). Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.6.3.16, ἐκ δυνάμεως εἰς ἐνέργειαν ἰέναι ("to pass from potential power to effective activity"). Numberless other passages evince this connotation of the word unmistakably (e.g. 3 Bar 10.9; Justin, *Dial.* 35.2; 96.2; 102.5; *Acta et Martyrium Apollonii* 22.3; *PGM* IV.289; L.9; cf. *MM* in loc. and the papyrus passages collected there).

²⁹ Of the activity of God: 1 Cor 12:6; 12:11; Gal 2:8; 3:5; Eph 1:11; 1:19; 1:20; 3:7; 3:20; Col 1:29; 2:12; *Barn.* 1.7; 1 *Clem.* 60.1; Justin, *Dial.* 35.2; 79.4; 94.1; 95.2; 1 *Apol.* 60.3; Athenagoras, *Apol.* 9.1; 10.2; 10.3; 10.4; *Acts of Thomas* 51; cf. 2 Cor 1:6; 4:12; Gal 5:6; Eph 4:16. Of supernatural powers: Mt 14:2; Mk 6:14; Rom 7:5. Also frequently of satanic or demonic activity: Eph 2:2; 2 Thess 2:7; 2:9; 2:11; *Barn.* 2.1; Justin, *Dial.* 7.3; 39.6; 69.1; 78.6; 78.9; 1 *Apol.* 5.3; 12.5; 23.3; 26.2; 26.4; 44.12; 54.1; 54.2; 62.1; 63.10; 64.1; 2 *Apol.* 7.2; 7.3; 8.2; 8.3; 12.3; Athenagoras, *Apol.* 18.1; 23.1; 25.2; 25.3; 26.1; 26.2. Also in Jewish literature quite frequently of the activity of God: 2 *Macc* 3.29; 3 *Macc* 4.21; 5.12; 5.28; *Ep. Arist.* 210.4; 266.6. On the frequent use of the term in the New Testament with reference to supernatural working, see Kenneth W. Clark, "The Meaning of ἐνεργέω and καταργέω in the New Testament," *JBL* 54 (1935) 93-101; J.H. Moulton, "'Inspired' Supplication (James v.16)," *ExpTim* 26 (1914-15) 381-83; *TDNT* 2.654.

ἐνεργεῖν).³⁰ The twofold καὶ in this phrase is emphatic, and accents the comprehensiveness of this inward divine operation, embracing the Philippians' willing as well as their doing. Verse 2:13 in a sense qualifies and reinterprets verse 2:12: the activity of the *Philippians* in working out their own salvation (τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12) is the result of *God's* activity in them (ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν, 2:13).

As we have seen, this accent upon the activity of God in believers is a leitmotif of the entire epistle, and elsewhere in the letter always refers to God's activity for the extension of the gospel (1:6, ὁ ἐναρξάμενος; 1:13, ἐν Χριστῷ; 1:14, ἐν κυρίῳ; 1:15, δι' εὐδοκίαν; 1:19-20, ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος; 1:28b-29, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ). The studied threefold occurrence in 2:12-13 of verbs cognate with ἔργον to describe both the activity of God (ὁ ἐνεργῶν, 2:13) and the activity of the Philippians (κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12; τὸ ἐνεργεῖν, 2:13), recalls the use of ἔργον and cognates throughout the letter with reference to mission activity in its various forms (1:6, ἔργον ἀγαθόν; 1:22, καρπὸς ἔργου; 2:25, συνεργός; 2:30, τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Χριστοῦ; 4:3). The similarity of Philippians 2:12-13 to 1:5-6 is especially striking, in the notable way in which the activity of the Philippians (τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5; τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12) and the activity of God in them (ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, 1:6; θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν, 2:13) are juxtaposed in each passage. This would indicate that in 2:12-13, as in 1:5-6, the activity for which God is at work in the Philippians is their partnership for the extension of the gospel.

The purpose of God's activity in the Philippians is their effective activity "in behalf of his good pleasure" (ὕπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας, 2:13).³¹ The preposition ὑπὲρ expresses the goal or object of the Philippi-

³⁰ Cf. 1 Thess 2:13, ὃς καὶ ἐνεργεῖται ἐν ὑμῖν; 2 Cor 4:12, ὁ θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν; 1 Cor 12:6, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν; Eph 3:20, τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ὑμῖν; Col 1:29, τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἡμῖν. Augustine captures the thought: *Deus facit ut faciamus, praebendo vires efficacissimas voluntati* (*De grat. et lib. arb.* 9.16).

³¹ It is a mooted point whether this phrase is to be taken with the participle ὁ ἐνεργῶν or the infinitive τὸ ἐνεργεῖν. As Lohmeyer points out, the natural sense of the word order would suggest the latter (*Philipper* 103), although no great difference in meaning rests upon the choice of either alternative. For the alternative view, see Lightfoot, Philippians 116; de Wette, *Philipper* 100; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriege* 100.

ans' activity.³² It is sometimes thought that εὐδοκία here refers to human goodwill among the members of the church.³³ Two factors militate decisively against this view. First, as we saw in the discussion of 1:15, εὐδοκία never refers to the "goodwill" of human beings.³⁴ Moreover, the εὐδοκία of which Paul speaks in 2:13 is the objective of the willing which God works in the Philippians, and so can hardly be identified with their own goodwill.³⁵ The word appears to be used here, not of the Philippians' goodwill, but, as in the great majority of its occurrences elsewhere in the New Testament and in the LXX, of God's purpose or "good pleasure."³⁶ As we saw in the discussion of 1:15, God's "good pleasure" in the New Testament always connotes God's gracious purpose to save (Mt 11:25-27; Lk 10:21-22; Eph 1:5; 1:9; cf. Lk 2:14; 12:32; Col 1:19-23), and is frequently associated elsewhere in Paul's letters with the preaching of the gospel (cf. 1 Cor 1:21, εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τῆς μαρτίας τοῦ κηρύγματος σῶσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας; Gal 1:15-16, εὐδόκησεν . . . ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). Strikingly, in the only other occurrence of the word in Philippians, it is directly connected with the proclamation of the gospel (δι' εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν, 1:15). Likewise in 2:13, Paul uses the term to refer to the divine good pleasure which is actively at work in the spread of the gospel. In this way Paul again traces the mission activity of the Philippians to God's activity.

Through the strongly emphatic placement of the predicate θεός, Paul in Philippians 2:13 decidedly accents this divine activity at work in the Philippians (θεὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν).³⁷ The activity of God, in Paul, the Christians at Rome, and in the Philippians, is, as we have seen, a major theme of the epistle (cf. 1:6; 1:13; 1:14; 1:15; 1:19-20; 1:28b-29). Throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18 Paul traces

³² Cf. Jn 11:4; Rom 15:8; 2 Cor 1:6, and see Robertson, *Grammar* 632, who provides further examples from the papyri.

³³ So Marshall, *Power* 124; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 101.

³⁴ See the full discussion above on pp. 189-191.

³⁵ Rightly Ellicott, *Philippians* 65.

³⁶ Cf. *Sir* 2:16; 32:14; 33:13; 35:3; 39:18; 41:4; 43:26; 1 Chr 16:10; *Test. Ben.* 11.2; Mt 11:26; Lk 10:21; Eph 1:5; 1:9.

³⁷ Cf. Eadie, *Philippians* 132; Schenk, *Philippenerbriefe* 218; O'Brien, *Philippians* 286; Lohmeyer, *Philippener* 103. The anarthrous form θεός "fixes attention upon Divinity, as in contrast to that humanity in which He wills and works" (Eadie, *Philippians* 131-32).

mission to the activity of God, and Paul's emphatic stress in the letter on the activity of God in the advancement of the gospel suggests that this concept is crucial to Paul's understanding of mission. How are the mission of the church and the activity of God related in Paul's mind? Paul's further exhortation to the Philippians in 2:14-18 will shed additional light on Paul's understanding.

6.3 *Philippians 2:14-15: Eschatology and Mission*

In Philippians 2:12-13, as we have seen, Paul's command to the Philippians to work out their salvation functions within the literary context of Philippians 1:12-2:18 as an exhortation to suffering in behalf of the extension of the gospel. Earlier in 1:27-30 Paul enriched this exhortation to suffer for the gospel through his use of Jewish traditions to portray the church at Philippi as the true Israel, a heavenly *πολίτευμα* within the earthly Roman colony of Philippi (1:27; cf. 3:20). Likewise in Philippians 2:14-15, Paul's paraenesis will employ Jewish traditions to shape the self-understanding of the community at Philippi.

Paul in 2:14 exhorts the Philippians that all their conduct is to be free of "grumbings and disputings" (*χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν*, 2:14).³⁸ Paul's concern here with dissatisfaction (*γογγυσμῶν*) and dissension (*διαλογισμῶν*) within the Philippian community echoes the concern of the apostle with disunity at Philippi which we have traced elsewhere in the letter (e.g. 1:15-18a; 1:27; 2:2-4; cf. 2:21; 4:2-3).³⁹ The word *γογγυσμός*, and the verb *γογγύζω* from which

³⁸ For the comprehensive *πάντα ποιείτε* ("do all things"), see 1 Cor 10:31, *πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιείτε*; Ignatius, *Eph.* 15.3, *πάντα οὖν ποιῶμεν ὡς αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν κατοικοῦντες*; cf. Col 3:17; 1 Cor 9:23. Due to the generalization of meaning evidenced by the verbs of activity in Greek (cf. Schmidt, *Synonymik* 412-14, and see note 3 above), *ποιεῖν* is hardly to be distinguished here from *πράσσειν* (cf. *ταῦτα πράσσετε*, 4:9), although a distinction between the two words is generally observable in many contexts elsewhere (cf. Schmidt, *Synonymik* 407-408; Trench, *Synonyms* 362).

³⁹ It is thus hardly the case that in 2:14 "troubles within the Philippian church are now brought to the surface for the first time" (Martin, *Philippians* 104). Because of the association with *γογγυσμός*, which always denotes expressed dissatisfaction (see Acts 6:1; Mt 20:11; Lk 5:30; and cf. Eadie, *Philippians* 136), *διαλογισμοί* are here not mere interior "doubtings" (pace Ellicott, *Philippians* 65-66; de Wette, *Philippus* 202-203) but disputes or dissensions which find expression within the community (cf. Mk 9:33, and see O'Brien, *Philippians* 292; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 101).

it derives, are in the LXX used repeatedly of the people of Israel in the wilderness.⁴⁰ This introduces an implied contrast with the wilderness generation, and this association is carried forward in the following verse, where Paul describes the aim or object (ἵνα) of the exhortation given in 2:14. The Philippians are to show themselves “blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation” (ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα μέσον γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης, 2:15a). Paul’s depiction of the Philippians as God’s holy children takes up imagery frequent in second temple sources to describe the Jewish nation.⁴¹ This language is especially prominent in descriptions of the purified Jewish nation in the eschatological time of restoration.⁴² The Christ hymn reveals, as we saw, that in Paul’s thought the promised eschatological age had dawned in Jesus’ exaltation as the messianic Servant.⁴³ In Philippians 2:15a, the imagery Paul employs thus identifies the Christians at Philippi with the purified eschatological Israel. The identity of the church as the true Israel is an important feature of Paul’s thought throughout his letters.⁴⁴ However, it is an especially prominent theme here and elsewhere in Philippians (cf. 3:2, ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἔσμεν ἡ περιτομή; 3:20; 1:27). As noted earlier, the letter elsewhere indicates a close relationship between division at Philippi and the threat of persecution, and a possible explanation may lie in a situation involving persecution of Christians in the Roman colony for refusal to participate in worship of the traditional gods and the imperial cult, and the attraction of potential protection from persecution which adoption of the Jewish badges of national identity may

⁴⁰ See Ex 16:7; 16:8; 16:9; 16:12; 17:3; 17:5; 17:10; Num 11:1; 14:27; 14:29; 16:41; 17:5; Ps 105:25; cf. 1 Cor 10:10.

⁴¹ Cf. 3 Mac 6.28, οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐπουρανίου θεοῦ ζώντος; Wisdom of Solomon 10:15, λαὸς ὅσιος καὶ σπέρμα ἄμεμπτον; 2:22, ἄμωμος; 17:2, ἔθνος ἅγιον; 18:4, οἱ υἱοὶ σου; cf. οἱ υἱοὶ σου in 12:19, 12:21, 16:10, 16:23; θεοῦ παῖδες, 12:7; παῖδες σου, 12:20; οἱ σοὶ παῖδες, 19:6; ὅσιοι παῖδες, 18:9; τέκνα, 16:21; ὡμολόγησαν θεοῦ υἱὸν λαὸν εἶναι, 18:13; παῖς κυρίου, 2:13; υἱὸς θεοῦ, 2:18. See also *Sib. Or.* 3.219, γένος ἐστὶ δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων; 5.202, θεοῦ τέκνα; *Ps. Sol.* 18.4, υἱὸν πρωτότοκον μονογενῆ.

⁴² Cf. *Ps. Sol.* 17.26, λαὸς ἅγιος; 17.27, υἱοὶ θεοῦ; *Test Levi* 18.13 τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ; *Sib. Or.* 3.573, εὐσεβέων ἀνδρῶν ἱερὸν γένος; 3.702, υἱοὶ . . . μεγάλοιοι θεοῦ; *Jub* 1.25.

⁴³ See above, pp. 224-233.

⁴⁴ For the church as the new Israel in Paul’s thought, cf. Rom 4:1-25; 9-11; 1 Cor 10:1-4; 10:18; Gal 6:16.

have offered at Philippi.⁴⁵ Such a backdrop would explain Paul's special emphasis on this conception in Philippians.

In using traditional Jewish imagery to present the church as the true Israel, Paul implicitly contrasts the Christian community at Philippi with the Jewish community. This contrast is sharpened by the skillful way in which Paul weaves into this imagery an allusion to the Song of Moses in LXX Deuteronomy 32:5. In the latter passage Moses sings of rebellious Israel's forfeiture of the divine sonship through idolatry: ἡμάρτοσαν, οὐκ αὐτῷ, τέκνα μωμητά, γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη ("They have sinned; they are not his; blemished children, a crooked and perverse generation"). In contrast to rebellious Israel, whom LXX Deuteronomy 32:5 describes as "blemished children" (τέκνα μωμητά) who do not belong to God (οὐκ αὐτῷ), Paul describes the Philippians as "children of God without blemish" (τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα). The description of the Christians at Philippi in 2:15a is clearly a reversal of the description in Deuteronomy 32:5. The implication is that the church, made up of both Jews and gentiles, is the true eschatological Israel of God.⁴⁶

Paul in Philippians 2:15a takes up Moses' further description of rebellious Israel in Deuteronomy 32:5 as "a crooked and perverse generation" (γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη), but in Philippians 2:15, this "perverse generation" clearly embraces the unbelieving gentile world. The allusion to LXX Deuteronomy 32:5 thus has the ironic force of including the unbelieving of Israel among the idolatrous gentiles. Having rejected God's righteousness in Christ Jesus (3:2-11), "nothing remains for Israel but to melt away into the 'perverse and straying' mass of the world's . . . humanity."⁴⁷

The Philippian Christians, by contrast, are depicted by Paul as set in the midst (μέσον, 2:15a; ἐν οἷς, 2:15b) of both Jews and gentiles as lights in the world. In second temple Jewish texts the diaspora is regularly described as situated among or in the midst of the nations.⁴⁸ In the context of the imagery of Philippians 2:15 already discussed,

⁴⁵ Cf. above, pp. 221-222.

⁴⁶ Cf. Williams, *Enemies* 138-139; Larsson, *Vorbild* 268-270.

⁴⁷ Collange, cited in O'Brien, *Philippians* 294. Cf. Phil 3:2-3, and the Johannine concept of ὁ κόσμος, which does not distinguish between unbelieving Jews and gentiles (Jn 1:10; 7:7; 14:17; 15:18-19; 17:14-16; 1 Jn 3:1; 4:5; 5:19). Paul's use of κόσμος in 2:15b is very similar.

⁴⁸ So 2 Macc 1:27, ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν; Ps. Sol. 9:2, ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει ἢ διασπορὰ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ; LXX Isa 52:5, ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν; Test Naph 8.4.6, ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

Paul's language functions to portray the Christians at Philippi as the diaspora of God.⁴⁹ Diaspora imagery in second temple texts serves to describe the Jewish people as sojourners among the nations, awaiting regathering to their homeland Jerusalem in the time of eschatological restoration.⁵⁰ Paul's diaspora imagery similarly functions to portray the Philippians as citizens of a heavenly nation, awaiting salvation in the day of Christ (3:20, ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς; cf. 1:6, 1:10, 1:23, 1:27-28, 2:10-11, 3:10-11). Paul's understanding of the church as the new diaspora reflects the strongly Jewish character of his thought in Philippians. Paul's thought is distinctive, however, in his remarkable combination of diaspora and eschatological imagery, reflecting his understanding of the eschatological fulfillment, which has now come in Jesus of Nazareth, as involving both present and future dimensions.⁵¹

Paul's thought is also unique in its striking accent on the missionary purpose of the church's dispersion in the world: ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ ("among whom you appear as lights in the world") (2:15b). Paul's imagery here alludes to another Old Testament passage, LXX Daniel 12:3: φανοῦσιν ὡς φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.⁵² Daniel 12:3 depicts the wise who lead many to righteousness as shining as the lights of heaven in the coming eschatological age. As we saw in Part One, Daniel 12:3 is an important focus of exegetical reflection in second temple Judaism, and the imagery of Daniel

⁴⁹ The church is portrayed as the new diaspora also in 1 Peter (1:1; 2:11-12) and James (1:1); on the church in the New Testament as the eschatological diaspora community, see Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Gottes Volk in der Zerstreuung: Diaspora im Zeugnis der Bibel," *Schriften zum Neuen Testament* (München: Kösel, 1971) 321-37, esp. 330-36; Goppelt, *1 Peter* 159; 77-78. Paul's language (ἐν οἷς, 2:15b) is very similar to 1 Pet 2:12, where the church is described as ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

⁵⁰ See LXX Isa 49:6; LXX Ps 146:2; 2 Macc 1:27; *Ps. Sol.* 8:27-28. Cf. Goppelt, *1 Peter* 78; van Unnik, *Selbstverständnis*; James M. Scott, "Exile and the Self-Understanding of Diaspora Jews in the Graeco-Roman Period," *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 173-218.

⁵¹ See above, pp. 229-231. The Philippians' identity as a heavenly πολίτευμα is likewise both a present and future reality (1:27, 3:20). Cf. 1 Cor 1:18, 15:2, 1 Thess 5:4-6, and see Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 177.

⁵² For the strong arguments that Phil 2:15b reflects a deliberate echo of Dan 12:3, see Peter Oakes, "Quelle devrait être l'influence des échos intertextuels sur la traduction? Le cas de l'épître aux Philippiens (2,15-16)," *Intertextualités: La Bible en échos* (Paris: Labor et Fides, 2000) 263-264.

12:3 is found in a great variety of Jewish texts.⁵³ In these texts the imagery of Daniel 12:3 functions to describe the blessedness of the suffering righteous remnant of the Jewish nation in the eschatological time of Israel's deliverance and restoration. Within Jewish thought, the imagery of Daniel 12:3 functions together with other traditions to express the conviction that it is faithful Jews who suffer for their God who will be eschatologically vindicated, and Paul elsewhere in Philippians draws upon these traditions to exhort the Philippians to endure suffering for the gospel (1:19-20; 1:27-30). However, what is striking, within this Jewish context, is Paul's application of the eschatological imagery of Daniel 12:3 to the Philippians in the present, for it reflects his conviction that the eschatological time of renewal has already dawned in Christ Jesus. This conviction is reflected in Paul's modification of the future tense *φανούσιν* of LXX Daniel 12:3 to the present tense *φαίνεσθε* in Philippians 2:15. In Paul's thought, the promises of Daniel 12:3 are already fulfilled in the church as the eschatological diaspora of God.

As we also saw in Part One, in Jewish thought the eschatological restoration of Israel involved the conversion of the nations, and in the Christ hymn Paul portrays the eschatological reign of Christ Jesus as inaugurated in the gentile mission.⁵⁴ Similarly in 2:15b, Paul modifies the wording of LXX Daniel 12:3 to express the missionary purpose of the Philippians as the eschatological diaspora of God in the world. Paul's adaptation of *τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* to *ἐν κόσμῳ* (2:15b) introduces a reference to the darkened and unbelieving world in which the Philippians dwell. Paul's accent upon the unbelieving world "among whom" (*ἐν οἷς*) the Philippians live is further evident in his alteration of the active form *φανούσιν* ("they will shine") to the middle form *φαίνεσθε* ("you appear"), which describes the Philippian community from the standpoint of those outside.⁵⁵ The imagery of the Philippians as "lights in the world" (*φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ*), in the

⁵³ See above, pp. 130-131.

⁵⁴ See chapter three above, and pp. 224-233.

⁵⁵ Paul's choice in 2:15a of *γένησθε* rather than *ἦτε* is also significant. The reading *γένησθε* is supported by all but one (A) of the premier witnesses for the letter (α B C 33 81 1739 and 1881); the reading *ἦτε* (supported by p46 A D F G) is probably the result of assimilation to *ἦτε* in 1:10. The verb *γίνομαι* is here (as always) not simply equivalent to *εἶμι*; it expresses, not merely what the Philippians are, but what they show themselves to be outwardly to others (cf. Mt 10:16, 1 Cor 10:32, 1 Thess 2:10, and see Schmidt, *Synonymik* 2.531).

context of 2:15b, thus describes them as bringing light to others, and is reminiscent of Matthew 5:14-16, where the followers of Christ are described as “the light of the world” (τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου, 5:14). Both Matthew 5:14-16 and Philippians 2:15 recall the widespread use of light imagery in ancient Judaism to describe the illumination and conversion of gentiles to the God of Israel in the eschatological time.⁵⁶ Strikingly, also in MT Daniel 12:3 those who shine as the lights of heaven are identified as the wise who instruct many in righteousness. Paul thus skillfully chooses and adapts the imagery of Daniel 12:3 to express the missionary identity of the Philippians as the eschatological diaspora of God, set in the midst of both Jews and gentiles and radiating to them God’s salvation.

6.4 *The Meaning of the Verb ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16a*

The circumstantial participial clause which immediately follows (λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, 2:16a) is dependent upon the preceding description of the Philippians as lights in the world (2:15b). The participial clause thus serves syntactically to describe *how* the Philippians are to be lights in the world, and contextually functions as an exhortation to the Christians at Philippi. In light of Paul’s focus on mission in the previous clause (2:15b), as well as throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18, one would expect in 2:16a an exhortation to spread the gospel. The content of Paul’s instruction in this verse, however, is a matter of debate. Interpreters are divided over the meaning of the verb ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16. Is Paul here exhorting the Philippians to hold the word forth, or to hold it fast? The majority of recent expositors have in fact opted for the meaning “hold fast” or the equivalent.⁵⁷ Others, including most older commentators, favor the meaning “hold forth.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See LXX Isaiah 42:6, 49:6 φῶς ἐθνῶν; *Wisdom* 18.4, τοὺς υἱοὺς σου, δι’ ὧν ἡμελλεν τὸ ἀφθαρτον νόμου φῶς τῷ αἰῶνι διδοσθαι; Tobit 13:13 (Sinaiticus), φῶς λαμπρὸν λάμψει εἰς πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς; Philo, *Mos.* 2.44; Rom 2:19, πέποιθας τε σεαυτὸν ὁδηγὸν εἶναι τυφλῶν, φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει; *Test Levi* 14.3-4, ὑμεῖς οἱ φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; and see the discussion of these and other texts in chapter three.

⁵⁷ So Merk, *Handeln* 185; Larsson, *Vorbild* 270-271; Glombitza, “Furcht” 105; Bowers, “Church” 100-101; Michael, *Philippians* 107-108; Martin, *Philippians* 121-122; Gnllka, *Philippierbrief* 153; Hawthorne, *Philippians* 103-104; Silva, *Philippians* 146; O’Brien, *Philippians* 297-298; idem, *Mission* 118-119; Köstenberger/O’Brien,

The lexica are similarly divided. Liddell-Scott-Jones gives, among the major senses of the verb, the meaning “hold out to, present, offer,” and renders ἐπέχοντες in Philippians 2:16 as “holding out (like a torch).”⁵⁹ Liddell-Scott-Jones does not, on the other hand, offer “hold fast” as a possible meaning of ἐπέχω. Thayer’s lexicon likewise does not list “hold fast” or an equivalent among the possible senses of the verb ἐπέχω, but does give the sense “to hold towards, hold forth, present,” and assigns this meaning to the verb in Philippians 2:16.⁶⁰ Bauer-Aland, by contrast, suggests the meaning “hold fast” for the verb in Philippians 2:16, and does not even mention the meaning “hold forth” as a lexical possibility.⁶¹ Moulton and Milligan give both senses, but favor the meaning “hold fast” for Philippians 2:16.⁶² In a recent study of the word and its meaning in Philippians 2:16, Vern Sheridan Poythress argues strongly against the meaning “hold forth” as a lexical possibility in Philippians 2:16.⁶³ Characterizing the evidence for this meaning as “very doubtful,” Poythress concludes that “until further evidence comes to light, we should refrain from claiming that ‘hold out’ is one of the meanings of ἐπέχω.”⁶⁴ However, Poythress also questions the sense “hold fast” as a possible meaning of the verb.⁶⁵ He suggests the meaning “hold” in Philippians 2:16, and that the clause be rendered “having the word of life” or “holding the word of life.”⁶⁶ The word is also treated in a recent article by Peter Oakes.⁶⁷ Like Poythress, Oakes strongly questions whether ἐπέχω can bear the sense “hold fast” suggested by

Salvation 194; Dickson, *Mission-Commitment* 107-114; Dibelius, *Philipper* 82; Haupt, *Gefangenschaftsbriege* 105-106; Schenk, *Philippierbriefe* 223.

⁵⁸ So Bruce *Philippians* 85; Beare, *Philippians* 92-93; Louw and Nida, *Philippians* 71; Lohmeyer, *Philipper* 109-110; Lightfoot, *Philippians* 118; and Eadie, *Philippians* 141-142. Marshall entertains this meaning as “a lexical possibility” (“Evangelists” 260).

⁵⁹ *LSJ* 619, s.v. ἐπέχω.

⁶⁰ Thayer, *Lexicon* 231, s.v. ἐπέχω.

⁶¹ Bauer-Aland, *WB* 578, s.v. ἐπέχω (“festhalten”).

⁶² *MM* 232, s.v. ἐπέχω.

⁶³ “‘Hold Fast’ versus ‘Hold Out’ in Philippians 2:16,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2002) 45-53.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 50-52.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 51-53.

⁶⁷ “Quelle devrait être l’influence des échos intertextuels sur la traduction? Le cas de l’épître aux Philippiens (2,15-16),” *Intertextualités: La Bible en échos* (Paris: Labor et Fides, 2000) 266-285.

Bauer.⁶⁸ He regards the meaning “hold forth” in Philippians 2:16 as possible, but unlikely. Instead, reviving the proposal of F.W. Field in the nineteenth century, he suggests that the clause in Philippians 2:16 reflects a specialized construction meaning to “be” or “serve” as life for the world.⁶⁹

The lack of consensus among interpreters and lexicographers makes a confident decision regarding the meaning of ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16 very difficult. And yet our decision regarding the meaning of ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16a is crucial to our understanding of the passage. Does Paul here exhort the Philippians to be lights in the world by holding firm to the gospel, or does he exhort them to be lights in the world by spreading the gospel to others? If the latter, Philippians 2:16 constitutes an explicit exhortation to spread the gospel, something which occurs, outside Philippians, nowhere else in Paul’s letters. The meaning of ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16 is thus of crucial importance for the question of church and mission in Paul.

And yet, surprisingly, no comprehensive study of the verb ἐπέχω has been undertaken. The New Testament lexica, of course, do not even attempt to provide a full analysis of the word’s meanings and functions in ancient Greek literature. The fullest and most systematic lexicographical treatment, Liddell-Scott-Jones, nevertheless includes only a fraction of extant occurrences of the verb. Poythress’ article, which calls the analysis of Liddell-Scott-Jones into question, is based upon the examination of only a portion of the verb’s semantic range in a small sampling of ancient authors. Oakes’ conclusions are likewise based upon analysis of a very limited selection of ancient texts. The decisive importance of Philippians 2:16 for the interpretation of Philippians 2:12-18 and of the letter as a whole, and therefore for our understanding of church and mission in Paul, thus calls for a comprehensive study of the verb ἐπέχω, based on all relevant evidence from literature and inscriptions in antiquity, at this point in our study.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid., 267-273.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 275-285.

⁷⁰ Limitations of space will of course permit only a selection of the relevant passages to be cited here. The analysis will also steer clear, as far as possible, of linguistic jargon and debates. Regarding method, this analysis will assume the view that most lexemes have a core meaning or meanings (*Grundbedeutung*) from which the various individual meanings of the lexeme are derived by metaphorical extension; for discussion, see, conveniently, John Lyons, *Linguistic Semantics: An Introduction*

Derived from the composition of the simple stem ἔχω (“hold, have”) and the prefix ἐπί (here indicating motion towards an object), the basic meaning of the verb ἐπέχω is “the idea of direction or extension toward a goal.”⁷¹ The basic sense of the verb is thus that of *holding out* or *extending* something to or against some person or thing. However, as with many compound verbs, the variety of meanings latent in the prefix results in two distinct senses which grow out of this ground-meaning of the verb.

Rarely before the fifth century B.C.E., but very commonly thereafter, the extensive verbal prefix ἐπί can denote a hostile sense (“against”) and the verb ἐπέχειν when used transitively thus denote the *holding up*, *halting*, *checking* or *stopping* of an object or activity.⁷² The verb is also often used in the same sense, but intransitively, to signify the *pausing*, *stopping*, *tarrying* or *refraining* of the subject.⁷³ The verb is used twice in this sense in the New Testament (Acts 19:22; Lk 4:42 [D]). This sense of ἐπέχω, in both transitive and intransitive usages, is extremely common in ancient Greek literature, especially in the hellenistic period, and examples could be multiplied. However, lexicographers and expositors are in complete agreement regarding this sense of the verb.⁷⁴ Moreover, expositors are also agreed that this cannot be the sense of the verb intended by Paul in Philippians 2:16. It is therefore the second major sense of the verb which requires our closest consideration.

In this second, and most basic, sense of the verb, the prefix ἐπί has a purely extensive sense (“to”), and the verb thus denotes the *holding forth*, *extending* or *offering* of something to some person or thing.

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 58-60. The results of this analysis, however, are not dependent on this point or any other issue of linguistic theory.

⁷¹ Schmidt, *Synonymik* 1.18: “die Grundbedeutung . . . [ist] die Bedeutung des Richtens oder Hinhaltens auf ein Ziel.” On the etymology of the simple verb ἔχω, see Frisk, *Wörterbuch* 1.602.

⁷² E.g. Homer, *Od.* 20.266; Ps. Homer, *Frogs and Mice* 276; Hesiod, *Scut. Herc.* 350; Sophocles, *Oed. Col.* 1432; Euripides, *Androm.* 160; Plato, *Apol.* 39d; 40b; *Phaedrus* 242b.9; Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 311a; Xenophon, *Hell.* 6.5.14; Diogenes Laertius 7.121; Josephus, *Ant.* 2.53.2; *Ap.* 1.202.2; Philo, *Conf.* 29.2; many other instances.

⁷³ E.g. Aeschylus, *Prometh.* 697; Plato, *Phaedo* 59e; Herodotus 7.139; 8.100; 9.93; Sophocles, *Electra* 1369; Euripides, *Ion* 1320; Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1047; Plato, *Parm.* 152b.5; Xenophon, *Hell.* 4.8.25; Gen 8:10; 2 Chron 18:5; Job 18:2; Josephus, *Ant.* 8.295.4; many other examples.

⁷⁴ Cf. *LSJ*, ἐπέχω IV; Thayer, *Lexicon* ἐπέχω 3; Bauer-Aland, *WB*, ἐπέχω 2.6; *MM*, ἐπέχω; Poythress, “Philippians 2:16” 48, 50; Oakes, “échos” 267-269.

The word is thus very frequently used of the *holding forth* of a cup to someone's lips, or of the *offering* of the breast to children.⁷⁵ The idea of extension seems to be clearly present in such contexts, and Liddell-Scott-Jones adduces a number of such passages as evincing the meaning "hold out to, present, offer."⁷⁶ This usage would thus appear to offer strong evidence for "hold out" as a possible meaning of the verb ἐπέχω. Poythress, however, calls into question whether such passages in fact support this meaning. Noting that almost all of the examples cited by Liddell-Scott-Jones in support of this meaning have to do with the holding of a cup or breast to the lips, usually of small children, Poythress argues that these passages reflect a specialized usage of the verb in the context of drinking, which is simply not relevant in general contexts such as Philippians 2:16.⁷⁷ Furthermore, according to Poythress, the concept of extension is not evident even in these cases, and their contexts rather suggest the meaning "hold" or "hold . . . to" rather than "hold out."⁷⁸ Since no clear examples of the meaning "hold out" have been adduced outside this specialized usage, which according to him does not in fact support this meaning, Poythress concludes that evidence for the meaning "hold forth" is lacking.⁷⁹ The entry for ἐπέχω in Liddell-Scott-Jones, according to Poythress, requires revision "so as not to give the misleading impression that 'hold out' is a well-attested sense that might fit the use in Phil 2:16."⁸⁰

Poythress is correct that the instances cited in *LSJ*, as well as the further instances cited immediately above, involve the holding of a cup or breast to the lips. However, his objection that this fact calls

⁷⁵ Of the *holding forth* of a cup to the lips: Homer, *Il.* 9.489, οἶνον ἐπισχών; 22.494, κοτύλην τις τυτθόν ἐπέσχε; *Od.* 16.444, ἐπέσχε τε οἶνον; Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1382; Plato, *Phaedo* 117c; Lucian, *Tox.* 37. Of the *offering* of the breast: Homer, *Il.* 22.83, μαζὸν ἐπέσχον; Euripides, *Androm.* 225, μαστόν ἤδη πολλάκις νόθοισι σοῖς ἐπέσχον; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 12.31, ἐπισχεῖν θηλήν; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 265a, θηλήν ἐπισχεῖν; 268f, θηλήν ἐπεῖχεν; *De fortuna Romanorum* 320d, θηλήν ἐπέσχεν; *Suppl. hell. Frag.* 1045, μαζὸν ἐπέσχε; *Anth. Graec.* 9.224; Lucian, *Zeuxis* 4.

⁷⁶ *LSJ*, ἐπέχω II.

⁷⁷ Poythress, "Philippians 2:16" 46-50. Poythress notes that two passages among those cited by *LSJ* are not in the context of drinking (*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 1:362; Theocritus, *Idylls* 13.46), but he dismisses their relevance. On these passages, see below, n. 87 and n. 88.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 47-49.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 48-50, 52.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

into question the meaning “hold out to, present, offer” assigned to these passages in *LSJ* is without foundation. For example, in *Odyssey* 16.444, ἐπέσχε τε οἶνον ἐρυθρόν, Poythress’ suggested meaning “hold” is simply impossible. The thought is not that Odysseus held red wine, but that he *gave* it to Eurymachus. Poythress says regarding Murray’s (LCL) translation (‘did hold to my lips red wine’) that “‘to my lips’ is not explicitly there in Greek.”⁸¹ But in fact it is, in the idea of extension toward an object which is expressed by the verb ἐπέχω. Similarly in all such passages, the thought is not that the cup or breast is merely held, but that it is *held forth* to the lips. Of the two alternative meanings Poythress suggests for these passages, the meaning “hold” thus emphatically will not work, but “hold . . . to” is adequate. But that is precisely because the translation “hold . . . to” includes the idea of extension toward an object, which is precisely what Poythress is at pains to deny. Poythress’ argument on this point reflects a fundamental confusion. The instances cited in *LSJ* regarding the holding forth of a cup or breast to the lips, together with the additional instances cited immediately above, strongly support the meaning “hold forth” as part of the verb’s lexical range.

Poythress’ other objection, that the known instances of the meaning “hold out” occur in the context of giving drink, and thus may reflect a specialized usage inapplicable to general contexts such as Philippians 2:16, is more weighty. The great majority of the instances cited in *LSJ* do in fact occur in the context of giving drink.⁸² The general lack of instances of the verb with the meaning “hold forth” outside this context is also the main reason Oakes, while considering this meaning as possible in Philippians 2:16, regards it as unlikely.⁸³ However, the decision of both Poythress and Oakes to confine their analysis to only a small group of ancient texts seriously skews their results. For, although this is not adequately reflected in Liddell-Scott-Jones, ἐπέχω with the meaning “hold forth” in fact occurs in antiquity with a wide variety of definite objects and in a great variety of contexts. The word is used, for example, of the *holding out* of the hand toward

⁸¹ Ibid., 47.

⁸² Poythress nevertheless ignores, in addition to the two passages mentioned in n. 77 above, three additional passages cited in *LSJ* under meaning III.1.a., “*hold or direct towards*,” and another given the meaning “*extend, spread out*” (II.2); on these passages, see n. 86 and n. 87 below.

⁸³ “échos” 269-270, 273, 281.

an object.⁸⁴ The word is also used of the *putting forth* of feet toward an object, or of the *holding out* of a knife.⁸⁵ The term is also used of the *directing* of a bow to the target, of horses to a place, or of the eyes to a person.⁸⁶ Aristotle employs the word to describe the octopus *extending* its tentacle, and Theocritus uses it to refer to the *holding forth* of a pitcher to a spring.⁸⁷ The word can also be used of the *offering* or *presenting* of a contribution.⁸⁸ When used in this sense, the verb is regularly accompanied by an accusative of the thing extended or held forth.⁸⁹ The person, thing or place to which something is held forth, if mentioned, is expressed by the dative.⁹⁰ However, this is often omitted as understood.⁹¹ The word is also frequently used with an accusative such as τὸν νοῦν or τὴν διάνοιαν to denote the *putting forth* or *directing* of one's interest or attention toward a matter, the matter being expressed by the dative.⁹² Already in Aristophanes, the accusative τὸν νοῦν or equivalent can be omitted as understood,

⁸⁴ Philostratus, *Imag.* 1.2.2, τὴν δὲ ἀριστερὰν . . . ἐπέχων; 1.23.4, τὴν χεῖρα ἐπέχων; *Anth. Graec.* 8.207 (παλάμην); Matro Pitanaeus, *Convivium* [= *Supp. hell.* Frag. 534] 29 (χεῖρα).

⁸⁵ Of the *putting forth* of feet: Homer, *Il.* 14.241, ἐπισχοίης λιπαροὺς πόδας; *Od.* 17.410, ἔπεχεν λιπαροὺς πόδας; Philostratus, *Imag.* 1.5.2, τὸν πόδα ἐπέχει. Of the *holding out* of a knife: Euripides, *Iph. T.* 1459; Plutarch, *Caesar* 9. Of the passages in this note, the first two are also cited in *LSJ*.

⁸⁶ Of the *extending* of a bow to the target: Pindar, *Ol. Ode* 2.89; Euripides, *Herc. Fur.* 984; Homer, *Od.* 22.15. Of the *directing* of horses to a place: Homer, *Il.* 17.465; Ps. Hesiod, *Sc. Her.* 350. Of the *directing* of the eyes to a person: Lucian, *Dial. of the Sea Gods* 289. Of the passages cited in this note, the first three are also cited in *LSJ*, under the meaning “hold or direct towards” (III.1.a).

⁸⁷ Aristotle, *HA* 550b; Theocritus, *Idylls* 13.46. These passages are also cited in *LSJ*, under the meanings “extend, spread out” and “hold it to or for” respectively. Poythress’ dismissal of the latter passage (see n. 77 above) is not convincing. The reference of extension toward an object evident in these passages is rightly recognized by Oakes (“échos” 281).

⁸⁸ *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 1:362, τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ἐπέσχκε τῇ πόλει. This passage is also cited in *LSJ* under meaning II, “hold out to, present, offer” (619). Poythress’ alternative explanation of the passage is forced (“Philippians 2:16” 48 [n. 16]).

⁸⁹ Cf. Philostratus, *VA* 6.11; *Corp. Herm.* 1.11; and the many passages given immediately above.

⁹⁰ E.g. Euripides, *Androm.* 225; Philostratus, *Imag.* 1.2.2; 1.23.4; Plutarch, *Caesar* 9; *Anth. Graec.* 9.224; Procopius, *Bell.* 3.8.20; 8.19.19; *Anec.* 17.23.

⁹¹ E.g. Homer, *Il.* 9.489; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 12.31; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 265a.

⁹² E.g. Plato, *Laws* 926b, ἐπὶ μείζοισι γάμοις τὴν διάνοιαν ἐπέχων; Plutarch, *Aemilius Paulus* 8, ἐπείχε τῷ πολέμῳ τὴν γνώμην; Lucian, *Alex.* 4, τοῖς μεγίστοις ἐπέχειν τὸν νοῦν. Cf. *LSJ* III.2.a.

and ἐπέχειν used with the dative alone or an equivalent to signify the directing of one's attention to a person or thing.⁹³ This latter usage is also found in the New Testament.⁹⁴

The passages cited show beyond doubt that the verb ἐπέχω can denote the *holding forth*, *extending* or *offering* of something to some person or thing. These passages, furthermore, reveal that the verb in this sense can take a great variety of direct objects and functions in a wide variety of contexts. In light of the evidence presented, Poythress' claim that this sense of the verb is restricted to the specialized context of giving drink is simply false.

In the passages considered up till now, the verb ἐπέχω is used, as it is in Philippians 2:16, *transitively* with an object accusative either expressed or implied. In all of these instances, as we have seen, the verb's root idea of extension is plainly evident. However, to gain a full grasp of this verb, so important to the exegesis of Philippians 2:16, it is also necessary to consider its *intransitive* functions. One of the methodological weaknesses of Poythress' study is his explicit decision to leave this aspect of the verb's semantic range unexamined.⁹⁵ Consideration of this feature of the verb's range of meaning reveals that this basic idea of extension, which we found present in the transitive functions of the verb, is also evident in the various intransitive uses of the verb. The verb can thus be used intransitively of the *advance* of ships, or of the *onslaught* of an enemy.⁹⁶ But when used intransitively the verb most commonly denotes the *extension* or *spread* of an entity over space, often accompanied by an accusative denoting the extent of space over which the subject of the verb reaches or extends. So the verb is used of a cloud which *overspreads* the sky (Philo, *Abr.* 43; *Moses* 1.176), of snow which *covers* the ground (Lucian, *Sat.* 9), or of vines or branches which *spread over* the land (Herodotus 1.108;

⁹³ *Lys.* 490; cf. Plutarch, *Pyrrhus* 16; Lucian, *Salt.* 78; 2 *Macc.* 9.25; Eusebius, *HE* 6.2.6.

⁹⁴ Lk 14:7; Acts 3:5; 1 Tim 4:16. In Herodotus ἐπέχω with an understood τὸν νοῦν can thus be used in conjunction with an infinitive of purpose or equivalent with the sense "intend" (1.80; 1.153; 6.49; 6.96), and the word is frequent in Sirach with an implied reflexive pronoun accusative and dative complement or its equivalent in the sense "rely upon" (5:1; 5:8; 16:3; 34:2; 34:15; 35:11; 37:11).

⁹⁵ "Philippians 2:16" 48-49.

⁹⁶ Of the *advance* of ships: Thucydides 8.105.3; Plutarch, *Timoleon* 8; *Antony* 66; Apollonius of Rhodes 4.1766. Of the *attack* of an enemy: Homer, *Od.* 19.71; 22.75; Hesiod, *Theog.* 711; Herodotus 9.59; Euripides, *Bacchae* 1131.

7.19). The word is also used of a fleet of ships which *spread over* the sea (Thucydides 1.50.2), or of the space over which a shadow *extends* (Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.14.10), fire *spreads* (Homer, *Il.* 23.238; 24.792) or a body *overstretches* (Homer, *Il.* 23.190; 21.407).

Ἐπέχω is often used in this sense with σκότος or νύξ as its subject, with an accusative of the extent of space which the darkness *over-spreads* or *comes over*.⁹⁷ But most frequently the accusative is omitted as understood and the verb is used absolutely of νύξ or σκότος which *comes* or *overspreads*.⁹⁸ Similarly, the opposite of darkness, φῶς, may be the subject of the verb, with an accusative of extent to express that over which the light *spreads* or *extends* or *comes*.⁹⁹ Νύξ may also be used with ἐπέχω metaphorically of a figurative night which “comes over” one.¹⁰⁰

Ἐπέχω may similarly be used with abstract substantives descriptive of *states* which *overspread* or *come over* peoples, cities, lands or crowds. So in Josephus the verb is used of a rumor which *spreads* over all Galilee (*Vit.* 132.1, ἐπισχούσης δὲ φήμης τὴν Γαλιλαίαν ἅπασαν; cf. *Ant.* 20.145), of evils which *overspread* an entire household (*Ant.* 17.65), of discouragement which *comes over* an entire multitude (*Bj* 5.543), and of commotion which *spreads over* a country (*Bj* 2.462, δεινὴ δὲ ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν ἐπέιχεν ταραχή).¹⁰¹ Elsewhere the word is used of peaceful conditions which *prevail* over a region, or of rule or empire which *extends* over an area.¹⁰² The verb can accordingly also be used absolutely, of states, conditions or phenomena that *exist widely* or are *prevalent* over an area or group of persons. The verb may be used in this way concretely, of *prevailing* fair weather (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 62.6) or winds (Herodotus 2.96; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 65.15; Plutarch, *Sertorius* 17), or, more abstractly, of *prevalent* unbelief (Philo, *Moses* 1.90), bad fortune (Demosthenes, *Cor.* 253)

⁹⁷ E.g. Aristotle, *On Marvelous Things Heard* 842a, σκότος ἐπέχειν τὸν τόπον.

⁹⁸ νύξ τε γὰρ ἐπέχειν, Philostratus, *Imag.* 1.30.4; σκότος ἐπέσχειν, Plutarch, *Caius Marius* 20; cf. *Crassus* 30 (νύξ); Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Log.* 2.117 (νύξ); σκότους ἐπέχοντος, Josephus, *Ant.* 15.55; νυκτὸς ἐπεχούσης, Philo, *Flacc.* 119.

⁹⁹ E.g. Plato, *Rep.* 508c, ὡς ἂν τὰς χροάς τὸ ἡμερινὸν φῶς ἐπέχη; Lucian, *Ver. Hist.* 2.12, τοιοῦτο φῶς ἐπέχει τὴν γῆν.

¹⁰⁰ As in Philo, *Flacc.* 159, νύξ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, καθάπερ ἐκλείψεως γενομένης, τὸν ἐμὸν ἐπέσχηκε βίον.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Philo, *Praem.* 76; *Spec.* 2.87; *Legat.* 257; Josephus, *Bj* 5.344; 6.180.

¹⁰² Lucian, *Deorum Iudicium* 12; Appian, *Bella civ.* 2.11.72.2; Plutarch, *Pompey* 53.

or lack (Philo, *Praem.* 134).¹⁰³ In line with the basic idea of *extension* inherent in the verb, ἐπέχω when used intransitively may refer not merely to extension of a subject over space, but also to extension over *time*, and thus refer to the *continuance* or *persistence* of someone or something over time.¹⁰⁴

As an outgrowth of its basic intransitive meaning of extension over space, ἐπέχω is frequently used to refer to the space which an object *occupies* or *takes up*, i.e. the space over which it *extends*. This more technical sense of the word is found first in Aristotle.¹⁰⁵ It is used thereafter with some frequency in this sense in discussions of space and mass, as a more or less technical term of philosophy.¹⁰⁶ The term could also be used with the same sense in non-technical contexts.¹⁰⁷ The word can thus be used of one who *occupies* a house, a multitude which *occupies* or *overspreads* a region, or one who *fills* a position or office.¹⁰⁸ The word is also used in a similar sense as a sort of military technical term for armies which *occupy* an area.¹⁰⁹

The verb when used in the sense discussed in the preceding paragraph is frequently followed by τόπον, to express the *place* or *space* which something occupies, or by χώραν, to express the *area* or *region* over which something extends.¹¹⁰ The term could also be used in this sense with τάξιν, to express the *place* or *position* which a thing occupies, the latter phrase being used most frequently in an abstract or metaphorical sense.¹¹¹ It is but a short step to the use of ἐπέχω with λόγον to express the *logical place* or *relation* which something occupies

¹⁰³ Cf. Philo, *Opif.* 81; *Aet.* 79; *Moses* 1.69.

¹⁰⁴ E.g. Aristotle, *Eccl.* 317; Plato, *Theat.* 1650; *Rep.* 411a; Josephus, *Bj* 4.442; cf. Homer, *Od.* 21.186; Herodotus 4.199.

¹⁰⁵ *On Indivisible Lines* 971b; *Meteorologica* 354a; 355b; 369a; *HA* 619a.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Philo, *Som.* 1.68; Plutarch, *De comm. not.* 1073e; Plotinus, *Enn.* 6.5.11; Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Phys.* 2.163; 1.38; 1.383; 1.388; 1.423; Ps. Philo, *Aet.* 30; 101; 115.

¹⁰⁷ Philostratus, *Lives* 2.550; Josephus, *Bj* 3.487; 5.186; 5.303.

¹⁰⁸ Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* 398a; Philo, *Legat.* 226; Eusebius, *HE* 3.37; Appian, *Bella civ.* 1.1.12.21.

¹⁰⁹ Herodotus 8.32; 8.35; 1.104; Thucydides 7.62; 2.101.

¹¹⁰ With τόπον: Aristotle, *HA* 619a; *On Indivisible Lines* 971b; *Meteorologica* 354a; 355b; 369a; Plutarch, *De comm. not.* 1073e; *Theseus* 25; Plotinus, *Enn.* 2.8.1; Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Phys.* 1.381; 1.383; 1.388; 1.423; Lucian, *Men.* 14; Philo, *Som.* 1.68; 1.238. With χώραν: Plutarch, *De def. Orac.* 411f; Josephus, *Ant.* 2.101; 8.82; Philo, *Heres* 223; *Abr* 45; Diogenes Laertius 3.57.

¹¹¹ Epictetus, *Ench.* 29.7; Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.8.7; Philostratus, *Lives* 1.516.

in relation to something else.¹¹² The meaning of ἐπέχειν λόγον is very close to that of ἐπέχειν τάξιν when the latter is used metaphorically, so that the two may in fact be used interchangeably (see Diogenes Laertius 2.1 and 7.155, and cf. Plutarch, *De facie* 921d); but ἐπέχειν λόγον refers more pointedly to the *function* a thing occupies, that for which it *serves* (cf. Philostratus, *Lives* 2.581). Paul's words in Philippians 2:16, in the employment of ἐπέχειν and λόγον together with a defining genitive, bear a marked similarity to the passages which employ the construction just discussed. This leads Oakes to suggest that Paul is employing this construction in Philippians 2:16, and thus to render the phrase as a command to occupy the position of life, that is, to *be* or *serve* as life in the world.¹¹³ The applicability of this usage to Philippians 2:16 will be discussed below.

In the examples cited above of the intransitive use of the verb, the idea of extension is very evident. We have thus seen that the idea of extension is a prominent component of the verb's meaning in both transitive and intransitive functions.¹¹⁴ The verb's intransitive usage to denote the spread, advance or extension of the subject, corresponds to the verb's transitive usage to denote the holding forth or extension of an object by the subject. The intransitive functions of the verb accordingly provide further important evidence for the idea of extension in the verb denied by Poythress. The evidence presented strongly supports the meaning "hold forth" given in Lid-dell-Scott-Jones as an important part of the word's semantic range, although how extensive this evidence is is not fully reflected in the entry in *LSJ*.

We have found in our study thus far two major senses of the verb ἐπέχω in antiquity. In the first sense (I), the verb can mean to *hold back* or *refrain*, whether transitively of an object or intransitively of the subject itself. In the second sense (II), the verb can be used either transitively to denote the *holding forth* or *extension* of an object, or intransitively of the *spread* or *extension* of the subject. Both of these meanings are widely attested in antiquity, and all the various uses

¹¹² E.g., Sextus Empiricus, *Pyr.* 3.154.

¹¹³ Oakes, "échos" 275-285.

¹¹⁴ As Schmidt rightly recognized, the concept of extension is at the core of the verb ἐπέχω (*Synonymik* 1.18). The prominence of the idea of extension in the verb is also recognized by Oakes ("échos" 270-272, 281).

of the verb which we have catalogued fall under one or the other of these two major senses of the word.

What, then, of the meaning “hold fast” suggested by Bauer-Aland? As noted, such a meaning for ἐπέχω is not found in Liddell-Scott-Jones or Thayer, and is called into question by both Poythress and Oakes. The absence of this meaning in Liddell-Scott-Jones is noteworthy, and reflects in fact an utter lack of evidence in antiquity for such a meaning of the word. The few instances alleged of such a meaning of the verb in Bauer-Aland are in fact based on a misunderstanding of the passages involved. *Testament of Joseph* 15.3, for instance, is cited by Bauer as an example of the meaning “hold fast” for the verb ἐπέχω. Here Joseph declares that he was desiring to weep (καὶ πάλιν ἤθελον δακρῦσαι, “And again I was wanting to cry”), but that for the sake of his brothers he restrained himself (καὶ ἐπέσχον ἑμαυτόν). Here ἐπέχω clearly has the sense that Joseph *checked* or *refrained* himself from crying (sense I above), hardly that Joseph held himself fast! Similarly, when Josephus reports that Herod gave a hypocritical reply to Maliceus, yet μόλις Ἡρώδης τὸν θυμὸν ἐπέχων (*Bj* 1.230), this can hardly mean, as Bauer suggests, that Herod was scarcely able to hold his rage fast, but rather means that he was scarcely able to *restrain* his wrath (sense I above).¹¹⁵

Bauer similarly cites, as passages in which ἐπέχω bears the sense “hold fast,” Plutarch, *Otho* 17 (εὐθὺς πᾶν τὸ στρατόπεδον καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐπεῖχε κλαυθμός), and Diodorus Siculus 12.27.3 (ταραχὴ τὴν πόλιν ἐπεῖχε). This, again, reflects a misunderstanding of these passages, which are rather examples of the common intransitive use of ἐπέχω in sense II above, with regard to rumors, commotions or moods which *spread* or *come over* peoples, cities or crowds.¹¹⁶ The sense of the Plutarch passage is thus not that weeping held the camp and city fast, but that weeping soon *spread over* both camp and city. Similarly in the passage in Diodorus Siculus, the thought is not of

¹¹⁵ Similarly Lk 4:42 (D), also cited by Bauer-Aland. Cf. Poythress, “Philippians 2:16” 50; Oakes, “échos” 268.

¹¹⁶ E.g. Josephus, *Vit.* 132.1, ἐπισχούσης δὲ φήμης Γαλιλαίαν ἅπασαν (“and when a rumor had spread over all Galilee”); *Ant.* 20.145; *Bj* 2.462, δεινὴ δὲ ὄλην τὴν Συρίαν ἐπεῖχεν ταραχὴ (“and a fierce commotion was spreading over all Syria”). For this usage of the verb, see pp. 264-265 above; cf. Oakes, “échos” 268-269. The evidence which Dickson cites in support of his claim that ἐπέχω “is also commonly used of ‘gripping’ or ‘taking hold’ of a person or thing” (*Mission-Commitment* 109) is based on the same semantic confusion evident in Bauer-Aland.

commotion which was holding fast the city, but of commotion which was *spreading over* the city.¹¹⁷ The passages which Bauer-Aland offers in support of the meaning “hold fast” thus do not support this usage, but rather reflect the well attested meanings of the verb discussed at length above.

Poythress’ slightly modified suggestion, that ἐπέχω can mean simply “hold” or “possess,” is likewise lacking any foundation in ancient Greek texts. Of the six instances he offers in evidence, none can bear the sense “hold” or “possess.” In the passages which he cites from Lucian, the verb has the established meaning *hold back*, *restrain* or *stop* (sense I above).¹¹⁸ In Appian, *Bella civilia* 2.11.72, the reference is not to the empire “maintaining” all things, as Poythress suggests, but to Roman rule which now *extends* over all.¹¹⁹ Similarly in Appian, *Bella civilia* 1.1.12, the thought is not of “holding” office (Poythress is perhaps misled by the English idiom here), but of a tribune continuing to *occupy* office, a usage of the verb discussed at length above.¹²⁰ Poythress is correct to question the evidence for the meaning “hold fast” suggested in Bauer, but evidence for the meaning “hold” or “possess” is equally lacking.¹²¹ It is telling that the sense “hold” or “hold fast” for the verb ἐπέχω, so popular among New Testament specialists, is virtually unknown to classical scholarship.

¹¹⁷ Similarly in Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis* 8.2, also cited by Bauer, where the context is Athenagoras’ argument that if there were more than one God, they would have to occupy the same space or a different space, either of which is impossible (ch. 8). In this context, Athenagoras’ description of God as ἐπέχων αὐτὸν [i.e. τὸν κόσμον] τῇ τούτων προνοίᾳ refers to his *occupying* or *pervading* of the cosmos (sense II above), not, as Bauer would have it, that God holds the cosmos fast. Likewise in *Sib.Or.* 3.340, cited by Bauer, the thought is of a river *occupying* or *overspreading* its channel (sense II), hardly of a river holding its channel fast!

¹¹⁸ In *Icar.* 14.21, of *holding back* or *stopping* a bird’s wing, so as to keep it from flapping; in *Tox.* 50.35, of *holding* someone’s mouth *shut*, so that he might not cry out; in *Calumn.* 12.17, of *holding back* a runner. For this sense of ἐπέχω, see p. 259 above.

¹¹⁹ Appian, *Bella civ.* 2.11.72.2, τῆς νῦν ἐπεχούσης τὰ πάντα ἡγεμονίας (“this rule which now extends over all”). For this usage of the verb, see p. 264 above.

¹²⁰ Rightly, Oakes, “échos” 272. For this sense of ἐπέχω, see p. 265 above. Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis* 8.2, which is also cited by Poythress, is discussed above in n. 117.

¹²¹ One passage is cited in *LSJ* with the meaning “hold” (*IPE* 2.37, σκῆπτρ’ ἐπέχοντος ὅλα), but the sense here is rather that of “extend” or “give” (sense II). Cf. Oakes, “échos” 273.

It can be stated categorically that the verb ἐπέχω does not bear the sense “hold” or “hold fast” in any ancient passage.

We may thus summarize our brief sketch of the semantic range of ἐπέχω. We may distinguish two major senses of the word. The first (sense I) is one in which the extensive prefix ἐπί also has a *hostile* sense (“against”), and the verb thus denotes, when transitive, the *stopping* or *checking* of an object by the subject, and when intransitive, the *stopping*, *pausing* or *refraining* of the subject itself. The second (sense II) is one in which the prefix ἐπί adds a purely *extensive* idea to the verb (“toward”), and ἐπέχω thus denotes, when transitive, the *holding forth* or *extension* of an object by the subject, and when intransitive, the *advance*, *spread* or *extension* of the subject itself. Each of these meanings, as our discussion has shown, is amply attested in ancient Greek literature of all periods. However, the meanings “hold” or “hold fast” are not attested, and the etymology and usage of the word sketched above in fact preclude such a meaning.

In Philippians 2:16a the verb ἐπέχω is used transitively, and thus lexically may denote either the *holding forth* of the word (sense II above), or the *stopping* or *restraining* of the word (sense I above). A third possibility which has been suggested, as noted above, is that λόγον does not here refer to the word of the gospel, but bears the specialized sense of logical place or relation, and that λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες thus means to *be* or *serve* as life in the world. Such a specialized usage of ἐπέχειν and λόγον with a defining genitive is indeed, as we have seen, part of the verb’s semantic range.¹²² All three elements do converge in Philippians 2:16. However, the resemblance is only a superficial one, for, as almost all expositors have recognized, λόγον does not here have the required technical sense of logical place or position, but clearly refers to the *word* or *message* of the gospel.¹²³ This specialized sense of the verb is thus not present in Philippians 2:16. The meaning *restrain* or *hold back* is also clearly not a possible meaning in this context. The sense *hold forth* is consequently the only possible meaning for the verb ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16a. The clause is accordingly to be translated “holding forth the word of life.” This sense of the verb is also demanded by the missional context of the

¹²² See above, pp. 265-266.

¹²³ Cf. Ac 13:26, ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης; 5:20, τὰ ρήματα τῆς ζωῆς ταύτης; 14:3, ὁ λόγος τῆς χάριτος; 2 Cor 5:19, ὁ λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς; also 1 Thess 1:8; 1 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 2:13.

immediately preceding clause, which, as we have seen, describes the Philippians as “lights in the world” (2:15b). The “word of life” (λόγον ζωῆς, 2:16a) which Paul’s Philippian converts are to hold forth is identical with “the word of God” (τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ) which Paul describes the Roman Christians as daring to speak fearlessly (1:14), and is a designation for the gospel message.¹²⁴ The clause λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες is thus an exhortation to spread the gospel.

The passage is extremely significant, because, as discussed in the Introduction to this study, in no other letter does Paul explicitly command his congregations to preach the gospel or to engage in active verbal mission. It is the general absence of such a mission command in Paul that has led many scholars to conclude with Paul Bowers that “a concept of the church as mission failed to take any definite shape in Paul’s thinking so far as it is available to us.”¹²⁵ But in light of the evidence presented regarding the meaning of ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16, such a view is no longer tenable. Paul did understand the church at Philippi as obligated to engage in active mission to outsiders, and in Philippians 2:16a he explicitly commands them to do so.¹²⁶ The presence of a command to active mission in Philippians 2:16, together with Paul’s demonstrable interest in the church as mission throughout the book of Philippians, reveals that the mission of his churches did occupy an important place in Paul’s missionary thinking.

6.5 *Philippians 2:16b-18: The Church’s Mission and the Mission of Paul*

Paul exhorts the Philippians to hold forth the word of life “that I may boast in the day of Christ, that I did not run for nothing nor labor for nothing” (εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα, 2:16b). In Philippians 2:16

¹²⁴ Some interpreters regard ζωῆς as a genitive of content, referring to the life of which the word tells (so Ellicott, *Philippians* 67; Eadie, *Philippians* 141). However, the genitive ζωῆς is more likely to be understood of the life which the word bestows; for the thought, cf. Acts 13:26, ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης; Acts 5:20, τὰ ρήματα τῆς ζωῆς ταύτης.

¹²⁵ “Church” 110.

¹²⁶ For the possible reasons for the concentration in Philippians of evidence for Paul’s interest in the spread of the gospel as a general Christian activity, see pp. 222-223 above.

and elsewhere, as is widely recognized, “Paul holds the view that his own eschatological hope is bound up with his converts’ spiritual condition as they jointly stand before the Lord.”¹²⁷ What is striking in Philippians 2:16, however, is the way in which Paul relates his boasting in 2:16b to the exhortation in 2:16a. Philippians 2:16a, as we have seen, is an exhortation to spread the gospel, and thus Paul’s joy in the day of Christ is bound up with his converts’ own mission activity for the extension of the gospel. Paul’s boasting in the day of Christ is dependent upon his converts “holding forth the word of life” (2:16a). Paul thus stakes the success or failure of his apostolic mission on the missionizing activity of his converts. Philippians 2:16 is thus of enormous significance for Paul’s understanding of his apostolic mission. Paul Bowers’ thesis, which has been widely followed, that “Paul’s missionary vocation finds its sense of fulfillment in the presence of firmly established churches” must be modified.¹²⁸ Philippians 2:16 reveals that Paul did not understand the fulfillment of his apostolic vocation to be realized in the establishment of firmly founded communities, but in the independent spread of the gospel from the communities he founded. Unless the Philippian Christians hold forth the word of life (λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, 2:16a), Paul’s apostolic mission to them will have failed (εἰς κενόν, 2:16b). The crucial place of the mission of the church in Paul’s missionary thinking could not be more forcefully expressed.

The relationship of the Philippians’ extension of the gospel to Paul’s ministry is highlighted in Philippians 2:16b-18. These verses, through their description of Paul, of the Philippians, and of their relationship, function to further shape the self-understanding of the Philippians. We will focus first on Paul’s portrayal in 2:17-18, before returning to closely examine Paul’s self-description in 2:16b.

6.5.1 *The Priestly Activity of the Philippians in 2:17-18*

The ἀλλά which introduces 2:17 is ascensive (cf. 1:18b, ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι; 3:8, ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι), and indicates that this verse represents a certain heightening of 2:16. In 2:17 Paul depicts his apostolic ministry, which he described in 2:16 under the images of running (ἔδραμον) and labor (ἐκοπίασα), as a sacrificial offering

¹²⁷ Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 185.

¹²⁸ “Fulfilling” 198; cf. Peterson, “Maturity” 188.

(σπένδομαι). This image accents, even more than the preceding images in 2:16, the severe afflictions and struggles experienced by Paul in his imprisonment for the gospel (cf. 1:17, θλίψιν; 1:30, ἀγώνα; 2:27, λυπῆν; 4:14, τῇ θλίψει). By this image, Paul's consecration to the cause of the gospel even in the midst of suffering, which we have seen functions in the letter as a model for the Philippians, is again powerfully expressed.

In both the Jewish cultus and pagan rites the libation was normally only an accompanying element to the sacrifice, and here too in Philippians 2:17 the weight of the verse falls not upon Paul's offering, but the sacrifice and service of the Philippians (τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, 2:17) over which (ἐπί, cf. Arrian, *Alex.* 6.19.5, σπείσας ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ) Paul's offering is poured.¹²⁹ The sacrifice (θυσία) to which Paul refers is identified as a specifically priestly function by the associated noun λειτουργία, which, in contrast to λατρεία, which is in the Septuagint frequently used of the worship of the entire people of Israel, is in the LXX used only of the sacerdotal service of the priests and Levites.¹³⁰ This connotation of the word is also reflected in the New Testament, where the term, when used, as here, of divine worship, is always used of priestly or sacerdotal functions.¹³¹ It is sometimes supposed that the priestly service in view here is that of Paul, but in that case Paul would depict himself as both offering and priest, and elsewhere in Philippians θυσία, λειτουργία, and their cognates are used either of the activity of Epaphroditus (2:25, λειτουργόν; 2:30, λειτουργίας), who functions in the letter as a paradigm for the Philippians, or of the Philippians themselves (4:18, ὁσμὴν εὐωδίας, θυσίαν δεκτὴν, εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ). In Philippians 2:17 Paul thus portrays the Philippians as a community of priests.¹³²

In his description of the Philippians as a community of priests, the Jewish underpinnings of Paul's thought in Philippians is once more

¹²⁹ Cf. Claude Tassin, "L'Apostolat, un «Sacrifice»?" *Le Sacrifice dans les Religions* (ed. Marcel Neusch; Paris: Beauchesne, 1994) 112-114. For the phrase τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ ("service of sacrifice"), cf. *1 Clem* 40.2, τάς τε προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας ἐπιτελεῖσθαι.

¹³⁰ E.g. Ex 28:39; Num 4:24; 1 Sam 2:11; cf. Trench, *Synonyms* 125-28; Lohmeyer, *Philippian* 143 (n. 4).

¹³¹ Cf. Lk 1:23; Heb 9:21; 10:11.

¹³² Cf. Best, "Spiritual Sacrifice" 287.

very evident. As we saw in chapter three, Jewish texts in the second temple period reflect the tradition of Israel as a nation of priests and prophets for the gentiles in the time of eschatological fulfillment.¹³³ Paul's description of the Philippians as priests thus continues Paul's portrayal of the church as the true Israel of God, an important theme throughout Philippians (1:27, 2:15, 3:2, 3:20).¹³⁴ In light of this tradition, the Philippians' identity as priests also reflects Paul's conviction that the eschatological time of renewal had dawned in Christ Jesus. What is especially significant, however, is that, as we have seen, this imagery in second temple texts uniformly expresses the mediatorial role of Israel for the gentiles.¹³⁵ Paul's use of this imagery thus depicts the Philippians as priests to the surrounding pagan world. In light of the Jewish background of Paul's thought in Philippians 2:15-17, the imagery of the Philippians as lights and priests for the world has an unmistakable missionizing thrust. The Philippians function as priests in "holding forth the word of life" (2:16) to the world.¹³⁶ Paul's ascription of this priestly activity, not to the Philippians themselves, but to their faith (2:17, τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν) once again reminds the Philippians that their activity is in reality the activity of Christ who acts through them.

In describing his own self-oblation and the priestly service of the Philippians as a joint offering, Paul again accents the Philippians partnership with him for the work of the gospel (cf. 1:5, τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον), in which God is effectively at work through

¹³³ See above, pp. 114-117, 124-127, 137-141.

¹³⁴ See the discussions above, pp. 218-219, 251-256.

¹³⁵ LXX Isa 61:6a, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἱερεῖς κυρίου κληθήσεσθε, λειτουργοὶ θεοῦ; *De spec. leg.* 2.163, ὃν λόγον ἔχει πρὸς πόλιν ἱερεὺς, τοῦτον πρὸς ἅπασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην τὸ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος; *De Abr.* 98, τὴν ὑπὲρ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους ἱερωσύνην; cf. *Sib. Or.* 3.195; *Wis* 17:2; and see the discussions of these texts in chapter three.

¹³⁶ In 1 Peter 2:9 the priestly service of the Christian community is also understood to involve a missionizing function, as is evident from the association of this designation with the language of proclamation and the conversion language of light: ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγέλιτε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς (2:9b). Cf. 1 Pet 2:11-12; 3:1-2; and see Elliot, *Elect* 41-42; 179-80; 192; 195-98; 221; W. Brandt, "Wandel als Zeugnis nach dem 1. Petrusbrief," *Verbum Dei Manet in Aeternum* (Wittenberg: Luther, 1955) 10-25; Goppelt, *Petrusbrief* 153-54. The missionizing aspects of 1 Peter 2:9 are not sufficiently recognized by Balch, *Wives* 132-35; Seland, "Common Priesthood" 116-119. Similarly in Romans 15:16, Paul applies this tradition to his own person to express his missionary role for the conversion of the gentiles.

the gospel which Paul brought to Philippi to extend the gospel through the Philippians (cf. 1:6-7; 1:29-30; 2:12-13; 2:16). This joint priestly activity is the basis of Paul's joy (χαίρω, 2:17b), and of his mutual joy with the Philippians (τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ὑμεῖς χαίρετε, καὶ συγχαίρετέ μοι, 2:18). So, too, in the thanksgiving period (1:3-11), the basis of Paul's joy (μετὰ χαρᾶς, 1:4) was the Philippians' partnership for the gospel (ἐπὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1:5). Similarly in 1:12-18 the ground of Paul's joy (ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω, 1:18a) was the wider proclamation of the gospel resulting from his imprisonment (Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, 1:18a). Paul thus throughout Philippians 1:3-2:18 ties his joy to the extension of his mission through the churches.

6.5.2 *Paul's Apostolic Self-Description in 2:16b*

In his description of the Philippians as priests (2:17-18), Paul seeks to mold the self-understanding of the church at Philippi. Similarly in 2:16b, in exhorting the Philippians to hold forth the word of life "that I may boast in the day of Christ, that I did not run for nothing nor labor for nothing" (εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα), Paul richly expresses his self-understanding as an apostle of Christ. In the first part of his self-description in 2:16b (εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον), Paul uses the imagery of a race to describe his apostolic ministry.¹³⁷ In 4:1, he will use similar athletic imagery to describe the Philippians as his joy and wreath of victory before the Lord at his advent. Likewise in 2:16b, his converts are his ground of boasting in the day of Christ that his ministry has been fruitful.¹³⁸ As we saw above, what is striking about Philippians 2:16b is the way in which Paul stakes the success or failure of his apostolic mission on the missionizing activity of his converts at Philippi (2:16a).

Paul further delineates his understanding of his commission through the second part of his self-description in 2:16b: οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα. These words introduce an apparent allusion to Isaiah 49:4.¹³⁹ The context of the allusion is the second Servant

¹³⁷ Cf. Pfitzner, *Agon* 76-129; Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 185.

¹³⁸ Cf. 1 Thess 2:19, στέφανος καυχῆσεως ("victory wreath of boasting"). See Malherbe, *Thessalonians* 185-186, 188.

¹³⁹ That Philippians 2:16b reflects a conscious echo of Isa 49:4 is argued persuasively by Larsson, *Vorbild* 272-273.

Song (49:1-6), in which the Servant expresses his fear that he has labored for nothing (לָרִיק נָעַתִּי; LXX κενῶς ἐκοπίασα), but is in turn promised by God that he will be a light to the nations (49:6). The repeated occurrence of similar allusions to Isaiah 49:4 and other portions of the second Servant Song elsewhere in Paul's letters suggests that the passage was of foundational significance in Paul's understanding of his apostolic mission.¹⁴⁰ That Paul, in Philippians 2:16b and elsewhere, consciously relates his gentile mission to the Servant Songs of Isaiah has been widely recognized.¹⁴¹ The Jewish background of Paul's thought in Philippians is here once again very evident. The echo of Isaiah 49:4 in Philippians 2:16b, in combination with allusions to Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in Philippians 2:6-9 and Isaiah 45:22-23 in Philippians 2:10-11, reveals a connected reading of Isaiah 40-55, with special focus upon the Servant Songs.¹⁴² The connection in Paul's mind between the second Servant Song and the gentile mission evident in Philippians 2:16 is also remarkable. As we saw in Part One, the focus in Isaiah 40-55 on God's activity for the nations reaches its climax in the Servant Songs, and the first two Servant Songs (Isa 42:1-9; 49:1-6) are in second temple Judaism a major focus of exegetical reflection on the eschatological conversion

¹⁴⁰ Cf. 1 Thess 3:5, εἰς κενὸν γένηται ὁ κόπος ἡμῶν; 1 Cor 15:10, ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ εἰς ἐμέ οὐ κενῇ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσώτερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα; Gal 4:11, μή πως εἰκῇ κεκοπίᾳκα; Gal 2:2, μή πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω; also 1 Thess 2:1. See also Gal 1:15 (Isa 49:1) and 2 Cor 6:1-2 (Isa 49:4, 49:8).

¹⁴¹ See especially the classic studies of L. Cerfaux, "Saint Paul et le Serviteur de Dieu d'Isaïe," *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1954) 2439-54, and Albert-Marie Denis, "L'Apôtre Paul, Prophète 'Messianique' des Gentils," *ETL* 33 (1957) 245-318; see also Traugott Holtz, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Apostels Paulus," *TLZ* 91 (1966) 321-30; Larsson, *Vorbild* 272-74; W. Radl, "Alle Mühe Umsonst? Paulus und der Gottesknecht," *L'Apôtre Paul* (ed. A. Vanhoye; Leuven: Peeters, 1986) 144-149; Hanna Stettler, "An Interpretation of Colossians 1:24 in the Framework of Paul's Mission Theology," *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (eds. Jostein Ådna and Hans Kvalbein; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000) 194; Hays, "Reading Isaiah" 216-217; Josef Blank, *Paulus und Jesus: Eine theologische Grundlegung* (München: Kösel, 1968) 222-230; Alexander Kerrigan, "Echoes of Themes from the Servant Songs in Pauline Theology," *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus 1961* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963) 217-228; Köstenberger/O'Brien, *Salvation* 165-166, 170.

¹⁴² On Paul's connected reading of Isaiah, see p. 229 above, and cf. Hays, "Reading Isaiah" 205-206, 220-223; Wagner, "Heralds." Paul's focus in Phil 2:6-16 on the Servant passages probably also reflects a recognition of these Songs as in some sense discrete contexts within the context of Isaiah 40-55; for similar evidence elsewhere in second temple texts, see above, pp. 111-112 (n. 49).

of the nations.¹⁴³ Paul's understanding of the second Song in terms of the conversion of gentiles is thus in continuity with second temple Jewish interpretation. Strikingly, however, Paul's use of this text occurs in the context of an exhortation to active mission (2:15-16). Paul's interpretation reflects his conviction, which we have traced throughout Philippians, that the eschatological reign of God over the nations envisioned in Isaiah 40-55 has now begun in Christ Jesus.

What is also remarkable about Paul's interpretation is his direct application of Isaiah 49:4 to his own apostolic ministry. In applying the words of Isaiah 49:4 to himself, is Paul identifying himself with the Servant figure of the second Servant Song (Isaiah 49:1-6)? Many interpreters have taken this to be Paul's understanding, and have argued that Paul saw his own ministry as prefigured in Isaiah's Servant Songs.¹⁴⁴ However, close analysis of Paul's use of the Servant passages, in Philippians and elsewhere, suggests a somewhat different conclusion. In Romans 15:20-21, Paul explicitly quotes Isaiah 52:15 in connection with his missionary ambition to proclaim Christ where he is not yet named (οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται, 15:21a). This passage shows that Paul clearly understood Isaiah 52:15 as envisioning the spread of the gospel, and he relates this in Romans 15:20-21 to his apostolic mission. However, Paul's understanding of Isaiah 52:15, in the context of Romans 15:20-22, clearly includes not only his own mission activity, but also the mission activity of others (cf. 15:20, ἵνα μὴ ἐπ' ἄλλότριον θεμέλιον οἰκοδομῶ; see also 1 Cor 3:10-15).¹⁴⁵ Similarly in Romans 10:15-17, Paul explicitly quotes LXX Isaiah 53:1 (κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;), identifying the "message" of Isaiah 53:1 with the gospel proclamation (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, 10:16).¹⁴⁶ However, that Paul did not regard this proclamation as entrusted to him alone is clear from Romans 10:15, where Paul, in citing Isaiah 52:7 as fulfilled in the Christian mission (ὡς ὥραϊοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ), writes, in contrast to the *singular* of the LXX (εὐαγγελιζομένου) and MT, the

¹⁴³ See chapters two and three above.

¹⁴⁴ See Cerfaux, "Serviteur" 446-454; Denis, "Prophète" 245-318; Holtz, "Selbstverständnis" 326-330; Blank, *Paulus* 222-230; Kerrigan, "Echoes" 217; Köstenberger/O'Brien, *Salvation* 165-166, 170; Stettler, "Colossians 1:24" 194.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* 1397.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Wagner, "Heralds" 209.

plural τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων, reflecting a plurality of proclaimers.¹⁴⁷ In 1 Corinthians 15:58, Paul applies the language of Isaiah 49:4, which we have seen occurs in Philippians 2:16 and frequently elsewhere in Paul in connection with his own apostolic ministry, to the church at Corinth.¹⁴⁸ In Philippians itself, Paul's direct application of Wisdom 2:19 and Daniel 12:3 to the believers at Philippi is also extremely significant.¹⁴⁹ As we saw in Part One, both of these passages reflect exegetically on the fourth Servant Song, and interpret the Song in a collective sense of the suffering but eschatologically vindicated righteous remnant of the Jewish nation. Paul's application in Philippians of both these texts to the believers at Philippi is remarkable. The texts cited, both in Philippians and elsewhere in Paul's letters, suggest that Paul's application of the second Servant Song to his own ministry in Philippians 2:16 is not meant to identify the Servant with his own person, but rather reflects a collective interpretation of the Songs identifying the Servant with the church and its mission to the nations.

But this conclusion immediately raises another question. As we saw in chapter five, in the Christ hymn (2:5-11) Paul identified the Servant figure of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 with Christ Jesus. Similarly in Romans 15:20-21, where, as we saw, Paul cites Isaiah 52:15 as fulfilled in the church's mission (οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται, 15:21a), the addition of περὶ αὐτοῦ, absent in MT but present in the LXX, is extremely significant, for the pronoun, which in the context of LXX Isaiah 52:13-15 refers to the Servant, in Romans 15:20-21 explicitly refers to Christ.¹⁵⁰ Romans 15:20-21, like Philippians 2:6-9, thus reflects a messianic interpretation of the fourth Servant Song in Paul's thought.¹⁵¹ How is Paul's collective understanding of the

¹⁴⁷ If, as is probable, 1 Pet 1:12 contains an allusion to Isa 52:7, the same exegesis of the passage seems to be reflected there as well (διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισαμένων). It is not entirely clear whether this plural rendering was the product solely of early Christian exegetical tradition or was perhaps already available in the καίγε or proto-Theodotonic recension (cf. Theodotion: ὡς εὐπρεπεῖς ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων). In either case, the preference for the plural reading in Rom 10:15 (and 1 Pet 1:12) is significant.

¹⁴⁸ 1 Cor 15:58, ὁ κόπος ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔστιν κενὸς ἐν κυρίῳ.

¹⁴⁹ See the discussions above, pp. 217, 219-220, 254-256.

¹⁵⁰ For fuller discussion, see Wagner, "Heralds" 197-202, 219-220.

¹⁵¹ Paul's messianic understanding of the fourth Song is also implicit in Rom 4:25-5:1, 10:16, and 1 Cor 15:3-4. Significantly, Morna Hooker has now changed her position and regards Rom 4:25 as reflecting conscious interpretation of Isa 53;

Servant in Philippians 2:16b and elsewhere to be reconciled with his identification of the Servant with Christ Jesus reflected in Philippians 2:5-11? The question has perplexed many interpreters.¹⁵²

The theological understanding which underlies Paul's allusion to the second Servant Song is illumined by Acts 13:47, where, in a striking parallel to Philippians 2:16, it is explicitly claimed that the gentile mission of Paul and Barnabas is the fulfillment of this Isaianic prophecy (Acts 13:42-52). The passage which Paul and Barnabas cite in Acts 13:47 at Pisidian Antioch is LXX Isaiah 49:6: τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν, τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς. In turning to the gentiles, Paul and Barnabas according to Luke fulfill the mission of the Servant of Isaiah 49:6, who is "a light to the gentiles" (φῶς ἐθνῶν). Some interpreters understand Luke simply to identify the Servant of Isaiah with Paul and his apostolic mission to the gentiles.¹⁵³ However, Luke's exegesis of the Servant passages, as a number of interpreters have recognized, is more rich and complex.

Luke's exegetical reflection on the Servant passages begins within his infancy narrative (Lk 1-2), which, as is now widely recognized, plays a critical role in his work.¹⁵⁴ The final and climactic hymn within the Lukan infancy narrative is the Song of Simeon (2:29-32).¹⁵⁵ Simeon's oracle introduces, for the first time, the key Lukan

see Morna D. Hooker, "Did the Use of Isaiah 53 to Interpret His Mission Begin with Jesus?" *Jesus and the Suffering Servant* (eds. William H. Bellinger and William R. Farmer; Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998) 101-103.

¹⁵² See the discussion in Larsson, *Vorbild* 273; Windisch, *Paulus und Christus* 137; Cerfaux, "Serviteur" 451-54; Haag, *Gottesknecht* 77.

¹⁵³ Kerrigan, "Echoes" 217; Wright, "Old Testament" 43; Claude Tassin, "Vous serez mes témoins: le message des Actes des Apôtres," *SEDOS Bulletin* 28 (1996) 290; Darrell L. Bock, "Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Luke's Use of the Old Testament for Christology and Mission," *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (JSNTSS 104; eds. Craig A. Evans and W. Richard Strenger; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994) 302-303.

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Robert Tannehill, "The Story of Israel within the Lukan Narrative," *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel: Luke's Narrative Claims upon Israel's Legacy* (ed. David P. Moessner; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1999) 326; Philip L. Shuler, "The Rhetorical Character of Luke 1-2," *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts* (eds. Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Philips; Macon, GA: Mercer, 1998) 173-189; and Ulrich Busse, "Das 'Evangelium' des Lukas: Die Funktion der Vorgeschichte im lukanischen Doppelwerk," *Der treue Gottes trauen: Beiträge zum Werk des Lukas* (Freiburg: Herder, 1991) 161-179.

¹⁵⁵ On the climactic role of Simeon's Song in the infancy narrative, see Bart

theme of salvation for the nations (2:30-32). As recent scholarship has recognized, this climactic prophecy within Luke 1-2, together with its crucial pendant 2:34-35, is programmatic for Luke's entire narrative.¹⁵⁶ Simeon's description of Jesus as a "light of the nations" (2:32) echoes Isaiah 49:6, and identifies the child Jesus with the Servant figure of the second Servant Song (Isa 49:1-6).¹⁵⁷ As Luke's narrative progresses, a number of allusions and direct quotations in both Gospel and Acts also identify Jesus' activity as the fulfillment of Isaiah's fourth Servant Song.¹⁵⁸ In Acts, in passages which recall Luke 2:30-32 and Isaiah 49:6, the risen Lord is the light which appears to Paul on the road to Damascus (φῶς, 9:3; 22:6, 9, 11; 26:13), and it is Christ who through his resurrection proclaims light both to Israel and the gentiles (26:23, φῶς μέλλει καταγγέλλειν τῷ τε λαῷ καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). Throughout Luke-Acts, it is thus Christ who is the Isaian Servant.

How, then, is Jesus' identity in Luke-Acts as the light to the nations of Isaiah 49:6 related to the application of this passage to Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:47? The answer is evident in the book of Acts' programmatic verse, where Jesus empowers the disciples to be his witnesses "to the ends of the earth" through the gift of the holy Spirit (1:8). The words "to the ends of the earth" (ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς) in 1:8 are an evident allusion to Isaiah 49:6, and, like Acts 13:47, identify the mission of the disciples in the power of the Spirit as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. The activity of the Spirit in the spread of the message is a major theme of Acts (cf. Lk 24:47-49; Ac 1:8; 4:8; 4:31; 6:10; 8:29; 8:39; 9:17; 10:19; 11:12; 13:2, 4, 9; 16:6-

J. Koet, "Simeons Worte (Lk 2,29-32.34c-35) und Israels Geschick," *The Four Gospels* (eds. F. van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. van Belle and J. Verheyden; Leuven: Peeters, 1992) 1568.

¹⁵⁶ See P. Grelot, "Le cantique de Simeon (Luc, ii, 29-32)," *RB* 93 (1986) 505-506; Hans-Josef Klauck, "Gottesfürchtige im Magnificat?" *NTS* 43 (1997) 138; W. Radl, "Die Beziehungen der Vorgeschichte zur Apostelgeschichte, dargestellt an Lk 2,22-39," *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (ed. J. Verheyden; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999) 297-312. On the relation of 2:34-35 to 2:29-32, see Koet, "Simeons Worte" 1557-1558.

¹⁵⁷ As seen by Cerfaux, "Serviteur" 441; Koet, "Simeons Worte" 1555-1556, 1561; Strauss, *Davidic Messiah* 117-119; Thomas S. Moore, "The Lucan Great Commission and the Isaianic Servant," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (1997) 48.

¹⁵⁸ Lk 22:37 (=Isa 53:12); Ac 3:13-14 (=Isa 52:13, 53:11); 8:30-35 (=Isa 53:7-8).

7).¹⁵⁹ In Luke-Acts the Servant is thus Christ Jesus, and the early Christian mission is the activity of Christ, who acts in the disciples through his Spirit to bring light to the nations (Lk 2:32; Ac 1:8; 13:47; 26:23). The collective understanding of the second Servant Song in Acts 13:47 (ἡμῖν; cf. ὑμεῖς, 1:8) reflects this Christological understanding of mission as the activity of Christ.¹⁶⁰

Paul's own understanding is evident in Romans 15:15-21, a passage with remarkable parallels to the language and thought of Philippians 2:16-17.¹⁶¹ Paul in this passage describes his apostolic mission as a priestly activity for the gentiles (15:16, λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ; cf. Phil 2:17, ἐπὶ τῇ λειτουργίᾳ καὶ θυσίᾳ; also 2:25, 4:18), and relates this activity to Christ's fulfillment of the fourth Servant Song (15:20-21; cf. Phil 2:6-9, 2:16; also 2:15, 4:5). The conversion of the gentiles is his ground of boasting that his ministry has been fruitful (15:17, ἔχω οὖν τὴν καύχησιν; cf. Phil 2:16, εἰς καύχημα ἐμοί). Paul's boasting, however, is not in himself, but in Christ Jesus (15:17, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), for his apostolic mission is in reality the activity of Christ working through him (15:18, κατεργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ). Through the grace of God given to Paul (15:15), Christ himself is active in him through the power of the holy Spirit (15:19, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος θεοῦ) to bring about the conversion of the nations (15:16-19). The boasting which Paul envisions is thus his joyous boasting in Christ and his power at work in bringing the gentiles to God. Thus for Paul, as for the author of Acts, "Paul's mission . . . is nothing less than the outworking of Christ's own mission."¹⁶²

The passages considered illumine Paul's understanding in Philippians 2:16. Paul can apply the words of the second Servant Song to his apostolic mission, not because he understood himself as the

¹⁵⁹ See Joseph Fitzmyer, "The Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts," *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (ed. J. Verheyden; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999) 165-184; Tassin, "Témoins" 293-294; Max Turner, "Empowerment for Mission? The Pneumatology of Luke-Acts," *Vox Evangelica* 24 (1994) 103-122.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Cerfaux, "Serviteur" 443: "C'est le Christ en réalité qui agit par ses serviteurs et témoins."

¹⁶¹ On the importance of this passage as an expression of Paul's missionary self-understanding, see Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* 244-254.

¹⁶² Wagner, "Heralds" 198; cf. n. 19 (p. 198): "Paul's sense of participation in Christ lies at the root of his own understanding of his role as an apostle and missionary."

Servant, but in light of his conviction that Christ the Servant was at work in him through the Spirit to fulfill his mission as a light to the gentiles (Isa 42:6, 49:6). Paul's mission activity is in reality the work of the risen Christ. Moreover, in Philippians and elsewhere in his letters, as we saw above, Paul's application of the Servant Songs to the early Christian mission is, as in Acts, a corporate one which includes not only Paul himself but believers generally. Paul thus understood the risen Christ at work to fulfill his mission as God's messianic Servant, not only in Paul's own apostolic mission, but also in the mission activity of his churches. In Paul's mind the mission activity of the church was in reality the activity of Christ at work in them to spread the gospel. This explains Paul's emphatic stress on the activity of Christ in the Philippians for the spread of the gospel which we have traced throughout the letter.¹⁶³ Through their participation in Christ and the Spirit through the gospel, God is at work in the believers at Philippi (θεός ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν, 2:13). In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 Paul speaks similarly of the word of God which he preached (λόγον ἀκοῆς παρ' ἡμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ) as effectively at work in the Thessalonian believers (ὅς καὶ ἐνεργεῖται ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν). Paul thus understands the mission activity of the Philippians (κατεργάζεσθε, 2:12), not as their work, but as the outworking in them of the power of Christ (ὁ ἐνεργῶν, 2:13; cf. Rom 15:18, κατεργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ). Paul can thus describe the Philippians as sharers with him in grace (συγκοινωνούς μου τῆς χάριτος, 1:7; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, 1:29), and traces this to the outworking of divine grace with which the name of Jesus was invested at his exaltation (ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα, 2:9b). In their suffering in behalf of the gospel, the relation of the believers at Philippi to the activity of Christ Jesus in the Christ hymn is thus more than that of imitation, for "the call to imitate Christ Jesus is made possible by the power of the living, exalted Christ, who is present and at work within the lives of believers through the work of his Holy Spirit."¹⁶⁴

Paul's understanding of the Servant Songs is thus both messianic and collective. Paul's interpretation of the Songs is, on the one

¹⁶³ 1:6, ὁ ἐναρξάμενος; 1:13, ἐν Χριστῷ; 1:14, ἐν κυρίῳ; 1:15, δι' εὐδοκίαν; 1:19-20, ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος; 1:28b-29, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ; 2:13, ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν.

¹⁶⁴ Hawthorne, "Imitation" 178.

hand, thoroughly at home in Judaism of the second temple period. Paul's messianic interpretation of the Songs is also reflected in second temple texts, such as the *Parables of Enoch* and Targum Isaiah. In its corporate aspects, Paul's interpretation coheres with the collective understanding of the Songs in evidence in Daniel 12:3, LXX Isaiah, and Wisdom 2-5, and Paul specifically alludes to both the Daniel and Wisdom passages in Philippians. On the other hand, Paul's understanding is radically new, not only in his conviction that the time of the eschatological conversion of the gentiles had now come, but also in the surprising combination of messianic and corporate aspects in his understanding of the Servant Songs. In Paul's understanding, the Servant is Christ Jesus, crucified, risen, and now active in the church to bring about the conversion of the nations.

Paul, then, understands the mission activity of the Philippians as the fruit of their participation in Christ and the Spirit through the gospel. This in turn illumines Paul's understanding, which we have traced throughout Philippians, of mission as an essential aspect of Christian identity, and explains Paul's radical call to the beleaguered community at Philippi to respond to the threat of persecution by boldly holding forth the word of life (1:14; 1:27-30; 2:15-16). It is the church's union with Christ which in Paul's thought is at the core of the church's identity as the true eschatological Israel (cf. 1:27; 2:15; 3:2; 3:20), and its mission to bring the gospel to both Jews and gentiles. In Philippians 2:15b, the verb employed is indicative, not imperative (φαίνεσθε, 2:15b); the Philippians are not exhorted to become lights, but are understood already to be lights, by virtue of their identity as those in whom Christ dwells. Through Christ Jesus, the light to the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν, Isa 49:6), the Philippians have become lights in the world (φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ, 2:15b). The consciousness of the church's mission which comes to expression in Philippians is grounded in Paul's understanding that Christ is actively at work in believers to fulfill his mission as God's messianic Servant to bring the light of the gospel to the gentiles. Paul's conception of the church's union with Christ is thus at the heart of his understanding of the church's mission to the world.

6.6 Conclusion

The Christ hymn in 2:5-11, as we saw in chapter five, portrays the eschatological reign of Christ Jesus over the nations as inaugurated

in the gentile mission. In 2:12-18, Paul spells out the consequences of the preceding Christ hymn by exhorting the Philippians to proclaim the gospel. Paul's exhortation to the Philippians in 2:12 to work out their own salvation does not introduce a new command but functions to sum up and climax Paul's entire appeal in 1:12-2:11. Echoing themes and motifs carefully developed throughout the epistle, the command functions within this wider context of the letter as an exhortation to the Philippians to boldly spread the gospel despite the threat of suffering and persecution. Just as Paul's bold preaching in the midst of dangers will result in his salvation (1:19-20), so the Philippians, through their own fearless proclamation of the word, are to work out their own salvation (2:12; cf. 1:27-28). This work, however, is not theirs but God's: the mission activity of the Philippians is the result of God's activity at work in them (2:13). Philippians 2:13, with its emphatic stress on God's activity in the Philippians, draws together and climaxes Paul's stress throughout Philippians 1:12-2:18 on the activity of God in the church's mission.

In 2:14-15, Paul continues the exhortation to mission activity by drawing richly upon Jewish traditions to depict the Philippians as the eschatological Israel of God set in the midst of the nations. Paul's striking application of Daniel 12:3, an important focus of exegetical reflection in ancient Judaism, to the believers at Philippi reflects his conviction that the eschatological time of renewal had now come in Christ Jesus. However, in 2:15 Paul skillfully adapts the imagery of Daniel 12:3 to express the missionary identity of the Philippians as lights for the gentile world. Paul's portrayal of the Philippians as lights among the gentiles reflects the widespread use of light imagery in ancient Judaism to depict the eschatological conversion of the nations. In applying these traditions to the Philippians, Paul portrays the church at Philippi as the eschatological diaspora of God set in the midst of both Jews and gentiles and bringing to them the light of God's salvation.

How the Philippians are to function as lights in the world is made evident in the exhortation which immediately follows in 2:16b to "hold forth the word of life" (λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες). The meaning in this clause of the verb ἐπέχω, which prior to the present work has not received comprehensive study, has been widely disputed. However, as the analysis in this chapter has shown, the word ἐπέχοντες in this phrase does not mean "holding fast" but can only mean "holding forth," and this clause thus constitutes an exhortation to spread the

gospel. As such Philippians 2:16 is very significant, for while Paul nowhere else in his letters gives an explicit command to his churches to spread the gospel, his exhortation to the Philippians to do so reveals that Paul did envision his churches as having an active mission to those outside. The crucial place which the mission of Paul's churches had in his missionary thinking is strikingly evident in 2:16b, where Paul stakes the success or failure of his mission on the extension of the gospel through his converts. Philippians 2:16 reveals that Paul did not understand his apostolic mission as fulfilled in the establishment of firmly founded communities (Bowers), but in the independent spread of the gospel from the communities he founded.

Paul's portrayal of himself and the Philippians in 2:16b-18 serves to further shape the self-understanding of the church at Philippi. In 2:17-18 Paul draws upon Jewish traditions of conversion to portray the Philippians as a mediatorial community of priests for the surrounding pagan world. The Philippians in Paul's thinking exercise this priestly function for the gentiles by holding forth the word of life which Paul first brought to them (2:16). In depicting his self-sacrifice and the priestly service of the Philippians as a joint offering to God, Paul describes his own imprisonment and the Philippians' suffering on behalf of Christ as a joint partnership for the work of the gospel.

Paul's self-description in Philippians 2:16b is of the most extraordinary importance for Paul's understanding of mission. Paul's interpretation of the second Servant Song in Philippians 2:16b in terms of the eschatological conversion of gentiles reflects the Jewish character of his thought. Paul's thought is unique, however, in his use of this text in the context of an exhortation to active mission (2:15-16). Paul's remarkable application of this passage to the gentile mission reflects a profoundly Jewish, but radically distinctive messianic-collective interpretation of Isaiah's Servant Songs, in which the risen Christ is understood as at work in believers to carry out his mission as God's Servant through the mission activity of the churches. For Paul, the mission of the church is the activity of Christ. This understanding in turn explains Paul's emphatic stress in Philippians on the activity of God and of Christ in the early Christian mission, as well as Paul's understanding, evident throughout the letter, of mission as an essential element of Christian identity. In Paul's thought, the mission activity of the Philippians is the fruit of their participation in Christ and his Spirit through the gospel.

CONCLUSION

In the beginning of this study we called attention to Paul's puzzling missionary practice, according to which he considered his mission completed in areas where his preaching activity had been confined to a few important urban centers along the major highways of the empire. Paul's selective missionary strategy raises acutely the question of the role which Paul envisioned his churches as having in the spread of the gospel. Paul's letters in general offer little light on this question. The letter to the Philippians, however, provides the solution to the puzzle.

This letter, although generally overlooked in discussion of early Christian mission, is a document of foundational importance for our understanding of the mission of the church in Paul's thought. The Jewish context of Paul's thought in Philippians is, in turn, the key to unlocking his understanding of church and mission in the letter. Scholars have failed to fully grasp Paul's understanding of church and mission, in large measure because they have failed to adequately grasp Jewish thinking in antiquity regarding gentiles and their conversion.

Our study thus began in Part One with an investigation of Jewish attitudes regarding conversion of gentiles in antiquity. Scholars have frequently assumed an existing Jewish mission as the context of the primitive Christian mission. The phenomenon of conversion of gentiles to Judaism was, indeed, well-known in antiquity, and proselytes and sympathizers may have been drawn to the Jewish community in fair numbers. However, there is no evidence of Jewish missionaries or of missionary preaching to gentiles, and very little evidence which might suggest active proselytizing on the part of Jews. Moreover, Jewish documents in antiquity do not reveal a consciousness of mission to the gentiles.

The lack of evidence for a Jewish mission has suggested to many scholars that there was a general lack of interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews in antiquity. This study, however, has documented a remarkably widespread and intense interest in conversion of gentiles among Jews throughout the second temple period. However, the context of this interest was not a Jewish consciousness of mission, but the expectation of a pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in

the impending time of the Jewish nation's eschatological restoration, linked with an interest in present day converts as an anticipation of this future conversion of the gentiles. Far from excluding one another, as conventional scholarly wisdom has assumed, the hope of a future conversion of the nations and interest in present day proselytes are closely related in Jewish thought. This distinctively Jewish understanding explains both the eagerness of many Jews to embrace gentile converts, and the lack of a Jewish mission to gentiles.

Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion in the second temple period were shaped profoundly by the Scriptures, especially the book of Isaiah. The Servant Songs of Isaiah, the unique expression in the Hebrew Bible of a mission for the gentiles, were in turn an important focus of exegetical reflection on conversion of gentiles and Israel's role for the nations in the second temple period. In a widespread exegetical tradition, the "light to the nations" of the first two Servant Songs was associated with the conversion of the gentiles in the impending time of eschatological renewal. Interpretation of the fourth Servant Song focused on the eschatological salvation of the suffering and afflicted righteous remnant of the Jewish nation, who hold fast to the covenant despite persecution, suffering and death. This is evident in such texts as Wisdom 2:5 and Daniel 12:3, the latter passage itself a major focus of exegetical reflection in the second temple period. Despite a diversity of interpretations regarding the identity of the Servant, both collective and messianic, Jewish interpretation of the second temple period uniformly understood the Servant passages in terms of the redemption and restoration of Israel in the eschatological time. In Jewish thought, the conversion of gentiles is an eschatological event.

The startling frequency with which allusions to the Servant Songs appear in discussions of conversion of gentiles in Jewish documents in antiquity reflects both the widespread interpretation of these passages in terms of conversion, and the profound role of these Songs in shaping Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion in the second temple period. This interest in conversion is also reflected in the tradition, present in a variety of texts, of Israel as a nation of priests and prophets for the gentiles in the time of the nation's eschatological redemption. While enthusiasm for gentile conversion was not shared by all Jews in antiquity, interest in conversion of gentiles was widespread and characteristic throughout the second temple period. Jewish sources in antiquity betray no hint, however,

of a consciousness of mission to gentiles in the present. Rather, Jewish thought envisioned the Jewish nation as a light to the gentiles in the impending time of the God of Israel's eschatological reign.

In light of the Jewish background explored in Part One, the mission consciousness and praxis evident in Paul's letter to the Philippians is remarkable. There is nothing comparable in Jewish sources to the language of proclamation, gospel and mission which suffuses this letter. The planned, itinerant missionary activity of Paul (1:12-13; 2:16), his consciousness of a divine commission to preach to the gentiles (1:16), and his active mission of verbal proclamation (1:19-20), are each without parallel in Judaism of the second temple period. The evidence in Philippians and throughout primitive Christian sources for missionary activity by apostles, their coworkers, and other missionary proclaimers forms a marked contrast to the Jewish sources examined in Part One. One of the results of this study is to set in bold relief the uniqueness of the early Christian mission.

Paul in Philippians also reveals a quite extraordinary interest in the spread of the gospel through the Christian community at Philippi. This focus on an active mission of the church, although, in light of Paul's other letters, striking and unexpected, pervades the epistle to the Philippians. The epistolary thanksgiving (1:3-11) identifies the central theme of the letter as the Philippians' partnership with Paul for the work of the gospel (1:5-6). In the opening portion of the body of the letter (1:12-26), whose theme is the advancement of the gospel (1:12), Paul portrays the daring fearlessness of Christians at Rome to speak the word of God (1:14), and his own courageous testimony to the gospel despite the threat of suffering (1:19-20), as examples for the Philippians. Paul also presents himself (1:21-26) and the Christians at Rome (1:15b-16) as models of consecration to the cause of the gospel, in counterpoint to the negative example of those who engage in mission from impure motives, and not in partnership with Paul (1:15-18). The focus in Philippians 1:12-26 on the spread of the gospel as a general Christian activity is striking. Moreover, Paul's depictions of the fearless speech of the Roman Christians, the bold speech of Job, and his own mission activity as models for the Philippians portray active verbal mission as an essential aspect of Christian faith and life.

In 1:27-2:18, Paul's practical application to the Philippians of the paradigms set forth in 1:12-26, Paul calls the Philippians, in imitation of him and the believers at Rome, to a united and fearless

struggle for the spread of the gospel despite the threat of persecution from the wider civic community at Philippi. Paul throughout this portion of the letter draws richly on Jewish traditions to shape the missional self-understanding of the Philippians. In 1:27 Paul employs traditional imagery for the Jewish nation to portray the church at Philippi as citizens of a heavenly city under the dominion of Christ, in contrast to that earthly colony of the Roman imperial order in which they live, in order to exhort the Philippians to conduct and sufferings which will promote the spread of the gospel. In assuring the Philippians that, like Paul (1:19-20), their sufferings for the gospel will result in their salvation (1:28-29; 2:12), Paul's paraenesis reflects Jewish traditions concerning the eschatological vindication of faithful Jews who suffer for their God. The exhortation to suffering in Philippians is without parallel in Jewish sources, however, in its striking accent on proclamation, speech and active mission. In the Christ hymn (2:5-11), Paul combines exegetical reflection on Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and Isaiah 45:22-23, in order to portray the fourth Servant Song as fulfilled in the passion, resurrection and exaltation of Christ Jesus (2:6-9), and to depict the eschatological reign of God over the nations envisaged in Isaiah 45:22-23 as inaugurated in the conversion of gentiles to Christ through the gospel (2:10-11). The hymn thus portrays the goal of Christ Jesus' activity as the suffering and exalted Servant as inaugurated in the gentile mission. Within this context, Paul's command to the Philippians to work out their salvation (2:12-13), which serves to sum up and climax Paul's entire appeal in 1:12-2:11, functions as an exhortation to spread the gospel despite the threat of persecution and suffering. In 2:14-15 Paul employs a variety of Jewish texts and traditions to portray the church as the eschatological Israel of God. Paul's use of diaspora imagery is rooted in Jewish traditions, but is also without parallel in second temple sources in its focus on the missionary purpose of the church's dispersion in the world. In Philippians 2:15 Paul skillfully adapts the language of Daniel 12:3, drawing upon the widespread use of light imagery in ancient Judaism to portray the illumination and conversion of the gentiles, to express the missionary identity of the Philippians as lights in a darkened world. In Philippians 2:16b Paul draws upon the second Servant Song, a major focus of exegetical reflection in ancient Judaism concerning the conversion of gentiles, to describe the relationship of his apostolic ministry to the Philippians in the gentile mission. Paul's portrayal of the Philippians as priests (2:17-18)

similarly reflects Jewish traditions of Israel as a mediatorial nation of priests and prophets for the gentiles in the eschatological era. Paul's use in Philippians 1:27-2:18 of Jewish texts and traditions regularly associated in ancient Judaism with the conversion of gentiles to shape the self-understanding of the Philippians is a striking feature of this portion of the letter. Together with Paul's exhortations to spread the gospel by example (1:12-13; 1:14; 1:19-20) and precept (1:27-30; 2:12-13; 2:16), these traditions give Philippians 1:12-2:18 an unmistakable missionizing thrust.

Within the missional context of Philippians 1:12-2:18, Paul's exhortation in Philippians 2:16 has a climactic force. The meaning of the verb ἐπέχω in this clause has been strongly disputed, although prior to the present work without the benefit of comprehensive study. However, in light of the evidence presented in this study, the meaning of ἐπέχω in Philippians 2:16 cannot be in doubt. In Philippians 2:16 Paul directly exhorts the Philippians to "hold forth the word of life." Philippians 2:16 is thus of the most extraordinary importance for Paul's thought regarding church and mission. As discussed in the Introduction to this study, Paul nowhere else in his letters explicitly commands his churches to spread the gospel. It is the general absence of such a mission command in Paul which has led many scholars to conclude that Paul's missionary thinking had little or no place for an active mission of his churches. However, Paul's extraordinary interest in Philippians in the spread of the gospel through his converts, and his explicit command to the Philippians to hold forth the word of life, makes this view untenable. Paul not only exhorts the Philippians to spread the gospel (2:16a), but stakes the success or failure of his apostolic mission on the extension of the gospel through his converts (2:16b). As Philippians makes evident, Paul did not understand his apostolic mission as fulfilled in his own preaching activity and the founding of established churches, but in the independent spread of the gospel from the churches he founded. Paul doubtless did not envision believers generally as participating in the sort of planned and public preaching activity in which he, his coworkers and other missionaries engaged. But Philippians reveals that Paul did understand his converts as obligated to seize opportunities to communicate the word of life to those outside, and that the work of missionaries and evangelists was in Paul's thought part of a larger context of active spread of the gospel by believers generally. Moreover, his radical call to the persecuted church at Philippi to hold forth the word of

life, despite personal risk and suffering, reveals that he understood a mission to spread the gospel as at the core of their identity as followers of Christ. The book of Philippians reveals the crucial place of the mission of the church in Paul's thought.

Why the striking interest in the spread of the gospel through his converts, and the presence of a command to active mission, only here in Philippians? How is one to explain the general absence of exhortation to verbal mission elsewhere in Paul? In the light of Philippians, neither the suggestion of Bowers that the church's mission failed to take definite shape in Paul's thought, nor the thesis of Dickson that Paul regarded the dissemination of the message as the exclusive responsibility of authorized missionaries and evangelists, can any longer be sustained. The evidence of Philippians rather suggests that the lack of an explicit command to spread the gospel elsewhere in Paul's letters reflects a shared understanding in which the obligation of believers to hold forth the word of life is presupposed in common by both Paul and his churches. This best explains the intriguing twofold character of the evidence in Paul's letters discussed in the Introduction, in which the absence of an explicit exhortation to verbal mission exists side by side a strongly missionary understanding of the church's life, conduct, sufferings, almsgiving, prayer and worship. In Philippians, by contrast, Paul's response to the particular situation at Philippi, which involved the threat of persecution, and accompanying disunity, brings his theology of the church's mission, including the obligation of believers actively to spread the gospel, to fuller expression. Read in the light of Philippians, the evidence elsewhere in Paul's letters for a missional understanding of the life and worship of the church is all the more striking and suggestive, and calls for much closer study. Philippians reveals that such passages are not the whole, but, as it were, the tip of the iceberg of Paul's thought regarding church and mission.

The present work also illumines the question of the source or origins of the missionary consciousness reflected in Philippians and throughout Paul's letters. If, as we saw in Part One, there was not a prior Jewish mission to gentiles, what is the source of the intense consciousness of mission evident in Philippians? This study has shown that Paul's missionary consciousness, while not having its origins in a previous Jewish mission, is nonetheless firmly rooted in Jewish understandings of gentiles and their conversion. The Jewish underpinnings of Paul's thought in Philippians, ironically enough widely

regarded as the least Jewish of his letters, are strikingly evident. In his connected reading of Isaiah 40-55 focusing on the eschatological reign of God, his interest in and interpretation of the Servant Songs of Isaiah in terms of the eschatological conversion of gentiles, and his expression of this interpretation through the cluster of allusion and echo, Paul's thought in Philippians is thoroughly Jewish. In view of the important role played by the Servant Songs in Jewish thought regarding conversion of gentiles, the number of allusions in Philippians to these passages and to key passages in second temple Judaism which reflect exegetically upon them (Wisdom 2-5, Daniel 12:3) is especially striking.

However, Paul's understanding, although firmly rooted in Jewish thought, was also thoroughly transformed by his conviction that Jesus is the Christ. The Christ hymn powerfully expresses Paul's messianic interpretation of the fourth Servant Song as fulfilled in the suffering and exaltation of Christ Jesus, and reveals Paul's conviction that the eschatological reign of God over the nations envisaged in Isaiah 45 had now begun in Jesus as the Christ. This conviction that the eschatological reign of God, which in Jewish thought regularly involved the conversion of the gentiles to the God of Israel, had now come in Jesus as the Christ, is at the heart of the consciousness of mission reflected in Philippians. This conviction also underlies the striking counter-imperial overtones of Paul's language in Philippians, for in Paul's thought the reign of God over the nations and their rulers is inaugurated through the conversion of gentiles to the gospel of Christ (2:10-11; cf. 1:19-20; 1:27-28; 3:20). The connection in Paul's thought between eschatology and mission is also evident in his striking adaptation of the eschatological imagery of Daniel 12:3 to express the missionary identity of the Philippians in the present (2:15), in his description of the Philippians' priestly activity on behalf of the gentiles (2:17-18), and in his application of the second Servant Song to the gentile mission (2:16). The consciousness of mission which pervades the letter had its source in the conviction that, through the exaltation of Jesus as God's messianic Servant, the eschatological time of the conversion of the nations had come.

Another crucial aspect of Paul's thought is the collective dimension of his understanding of the Servant Songs. This aspect, in evidence elsewhere in Paul's letters, is underscored in Philippians by Paul's application of the second Servant Song to his apostolic mission (2:16b), and Daniel 12:3 and Wisdom 2-5, two key texts which

reflect exegetically on the fourth Song, to the Philippians (1:28; 2:15; 4:5). Paul's thinking, in Philippians and elsewhere, reflects a messianic-collective interpretation of the Servant Songs, in which the risen Christ is understood as active in believers to carry out his mission as God's Servant. The consciousness of the church's mission evident in Philippians is thus rooted, not only in the conviction that in Christ's exaltation the eschatological time of the conversion of gentiles had come, but also in the understanding that the risen and exalted Christ was active through the church to bring the light of the gospel to the gentiles.

This in turn illumines Paul's emphatic stress in Philippians on the activity of God in the church's mission. Throughout Philippians, the spread of the gospel is always traced to the activity of God, Christ or the Spirit (1:6; 1:13; 1:14; 1:15; 1:19-20; 1:28b-29; 2:13). Paul's thought reflects the theocentric understanding which pervades the Jewish sources examined in Part One, in which the eschatological conversion of the nations is the activity of God. However, Paul's understanding is distinctive, for he understands God's activity as involving a present divine work within his converts actively to spread the word. Paul traces the power of God at work in the Philippians to the divine power unleashed at the exaltation of Christ Jesus, mediated to his converts through his apostolic mission, and now at work in them through their participation in Christ and his Spirit through the gospel. Paul thus understands the missionizing of his converts as the extension of his own missionary activity. That is why Paul could write to the Romans that he had completed the preaching of the gospel (Romans 15:19) in regions where he had in fact formed only a few small communities in major provincial centers such as Philippi. Paul was persuaded that, through the power of the risen and exalted Lord Jesus at work in them through the gospel which he preached, his converts, at Philippi and elsewhere, would in turn hold forth the word of life to the world. In Paul's thought, the mission of the church is the activity of Christ.

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